

# Homunculus



HIDEO  
YAMAMOTO

7-8





Homunculus

**HIDEO YAMAMOTO**



# Volume 7









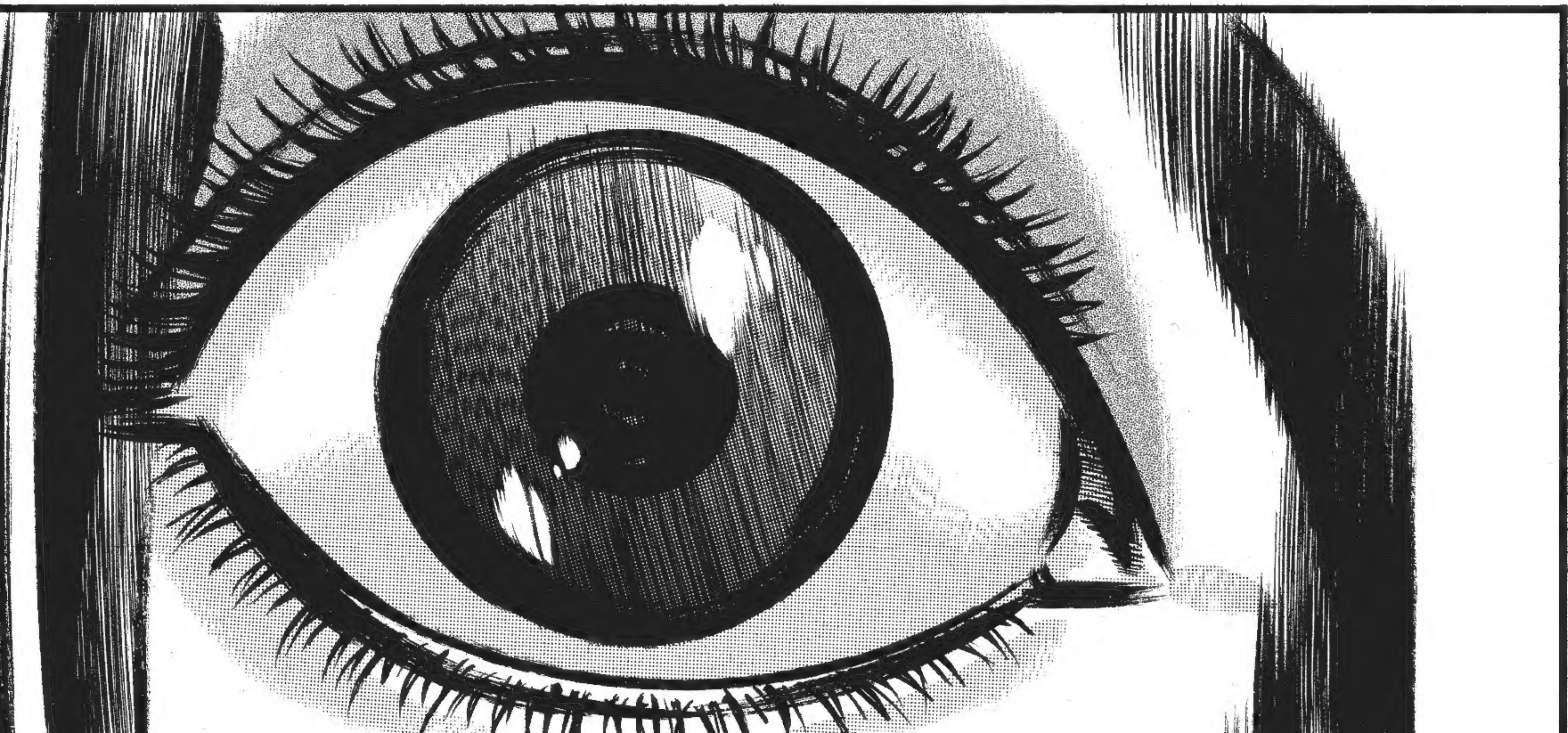
GOIN'  
THROUGH THE  
MOTIONS LIKE  
A WALKIN'  
CORPSE. THE  
HELL DO YOU  
KNOW?!

I'M A  
HYPOCRITE?  
NOT TWO  
SECONDS AGO,  
YOU WAS LIVIN'  
A DAMN LIE.



HUH?









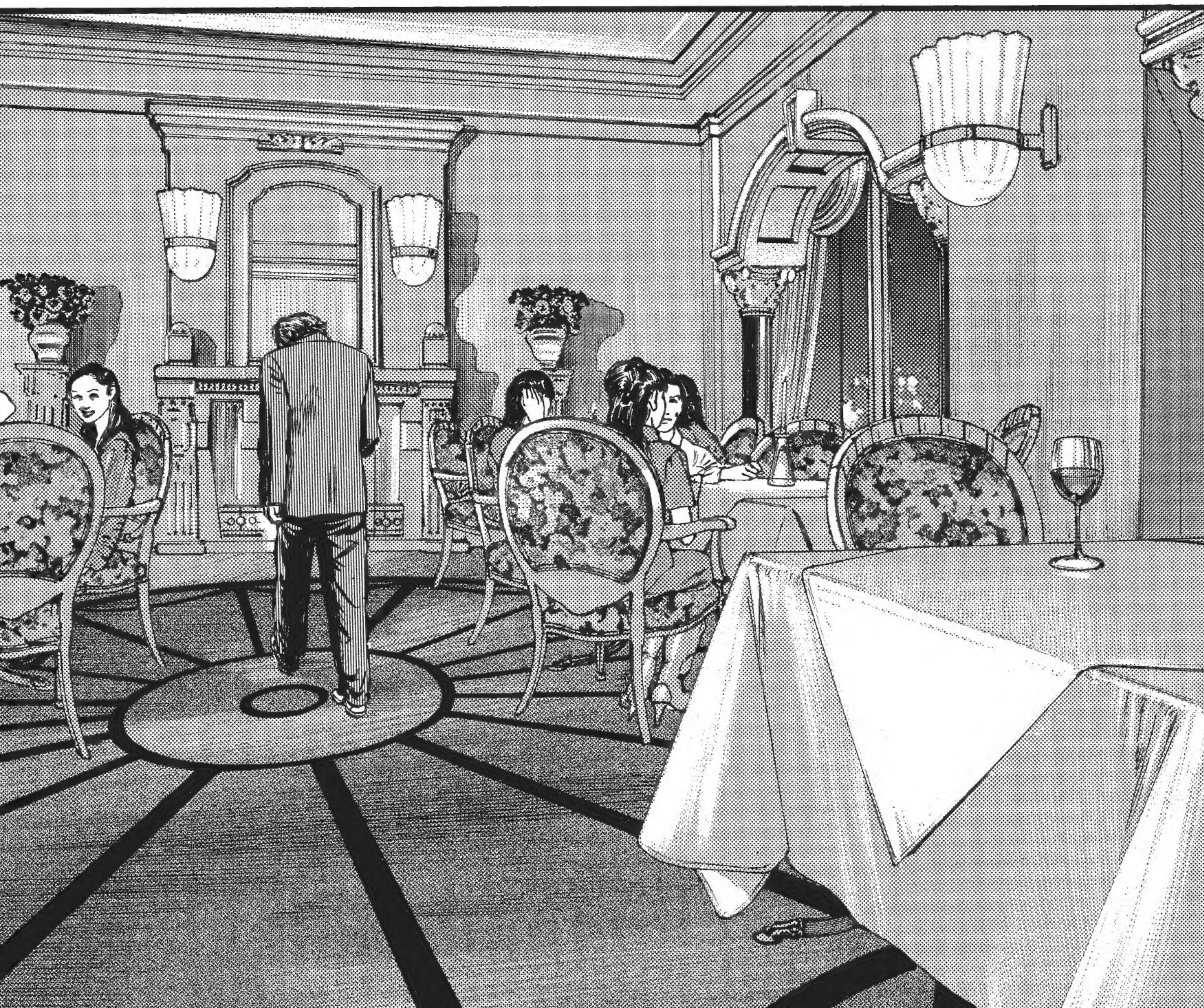
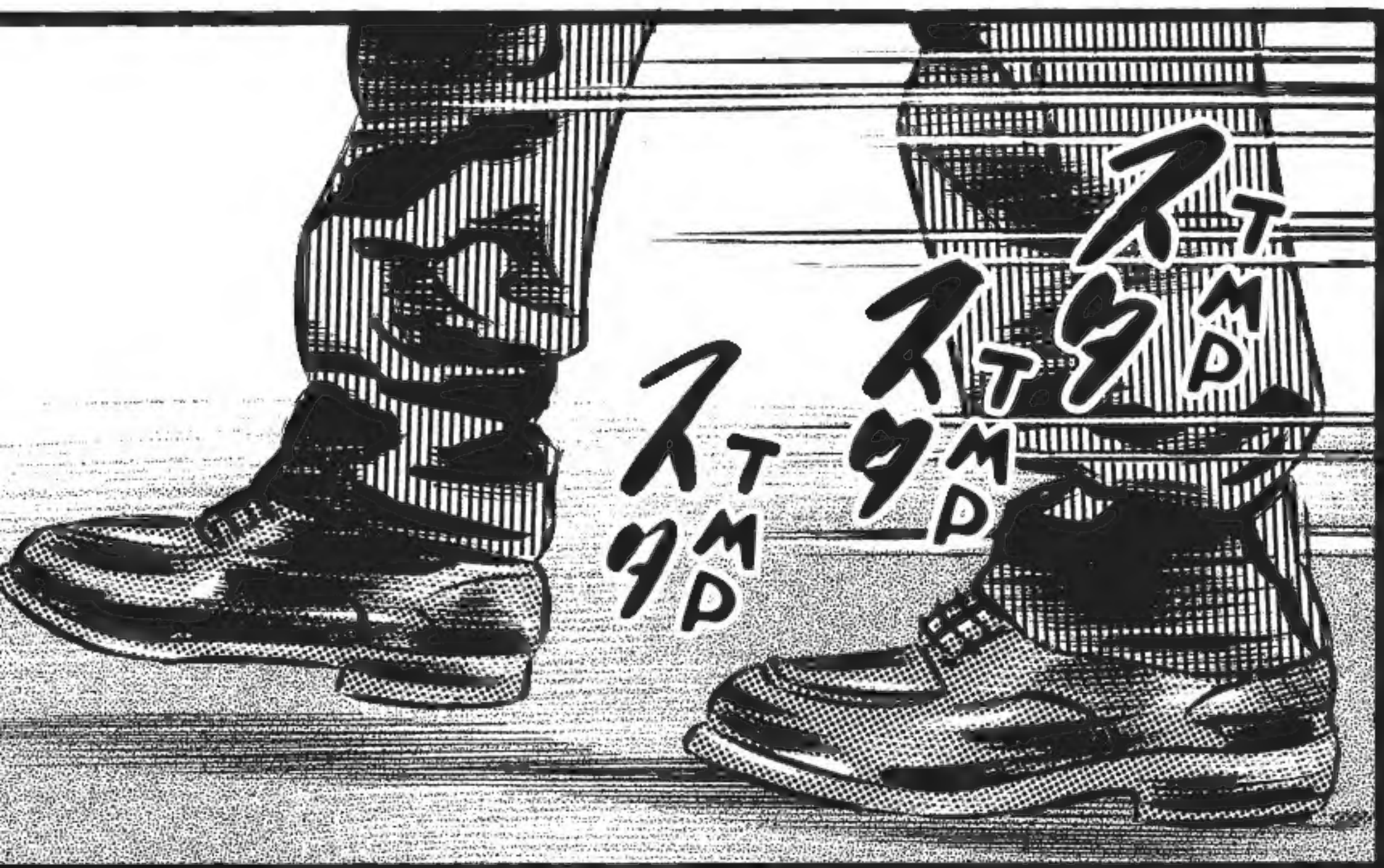




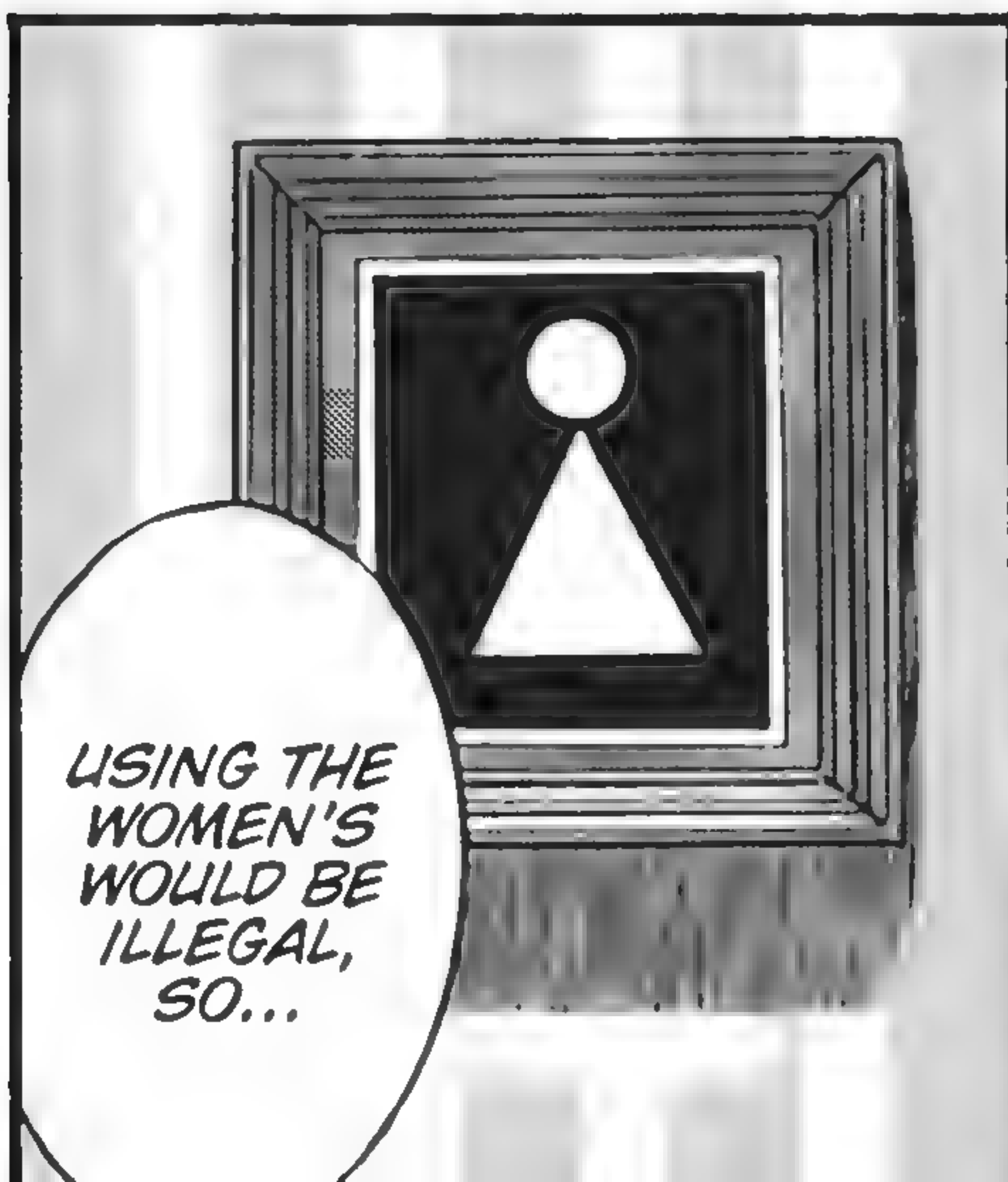




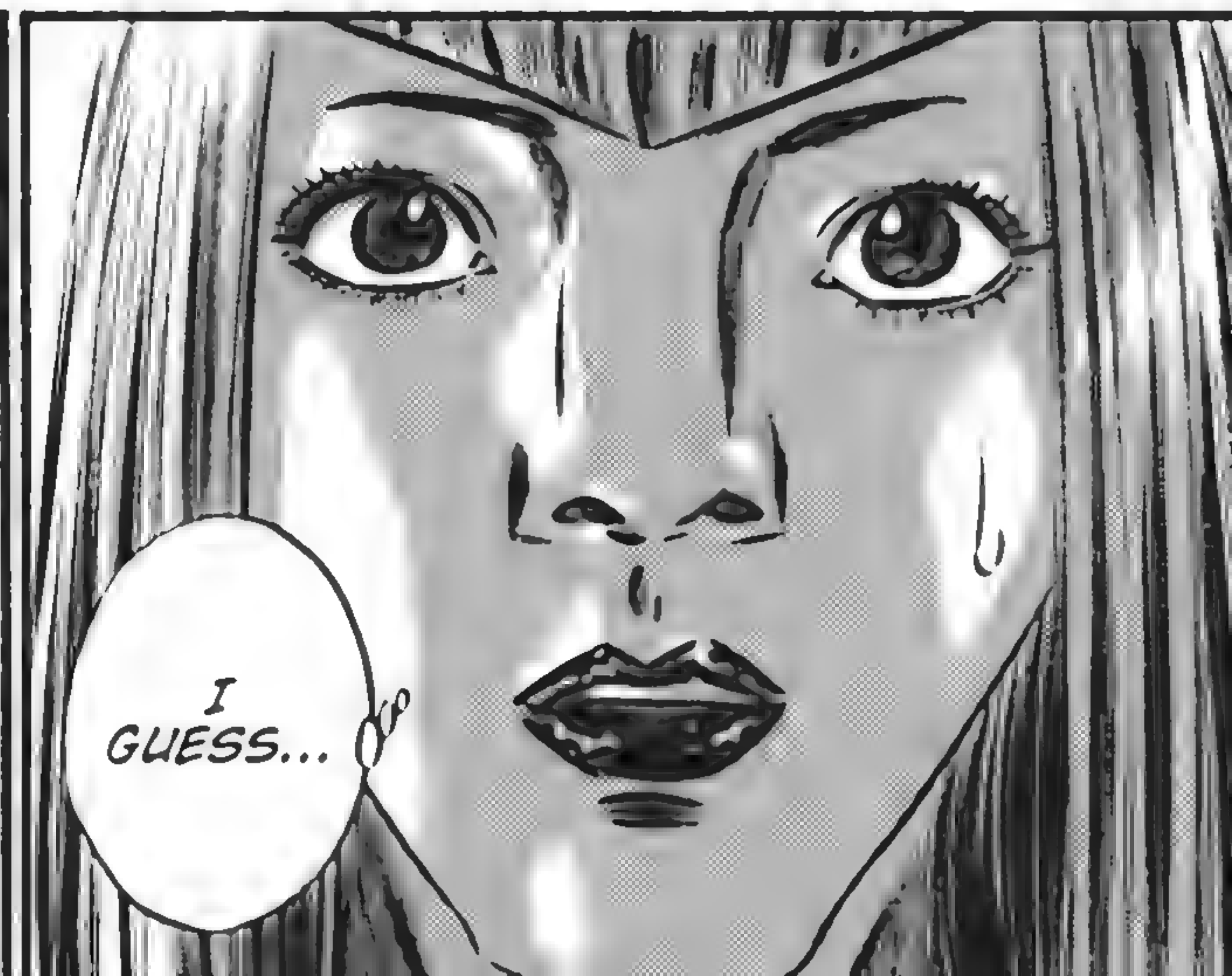






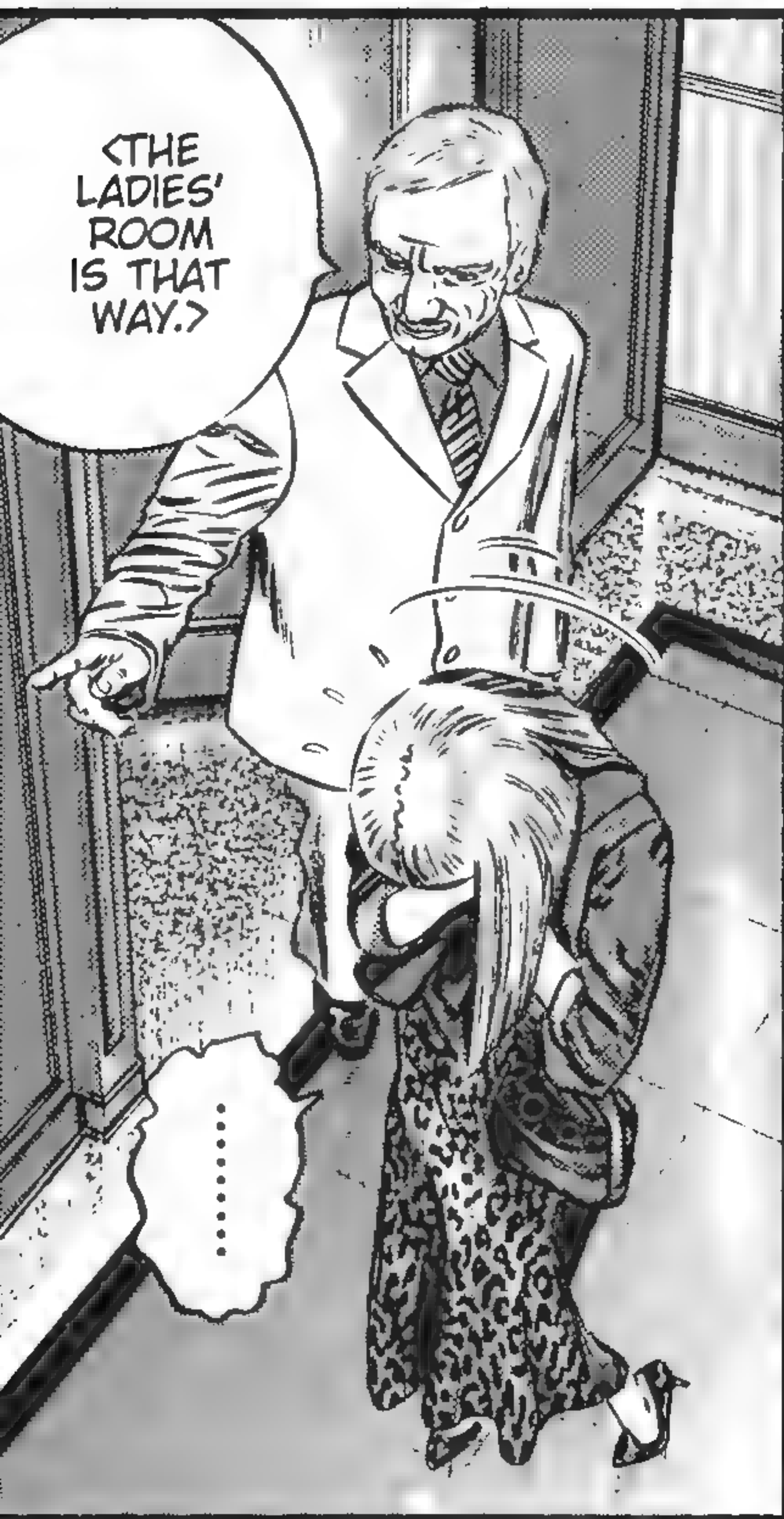
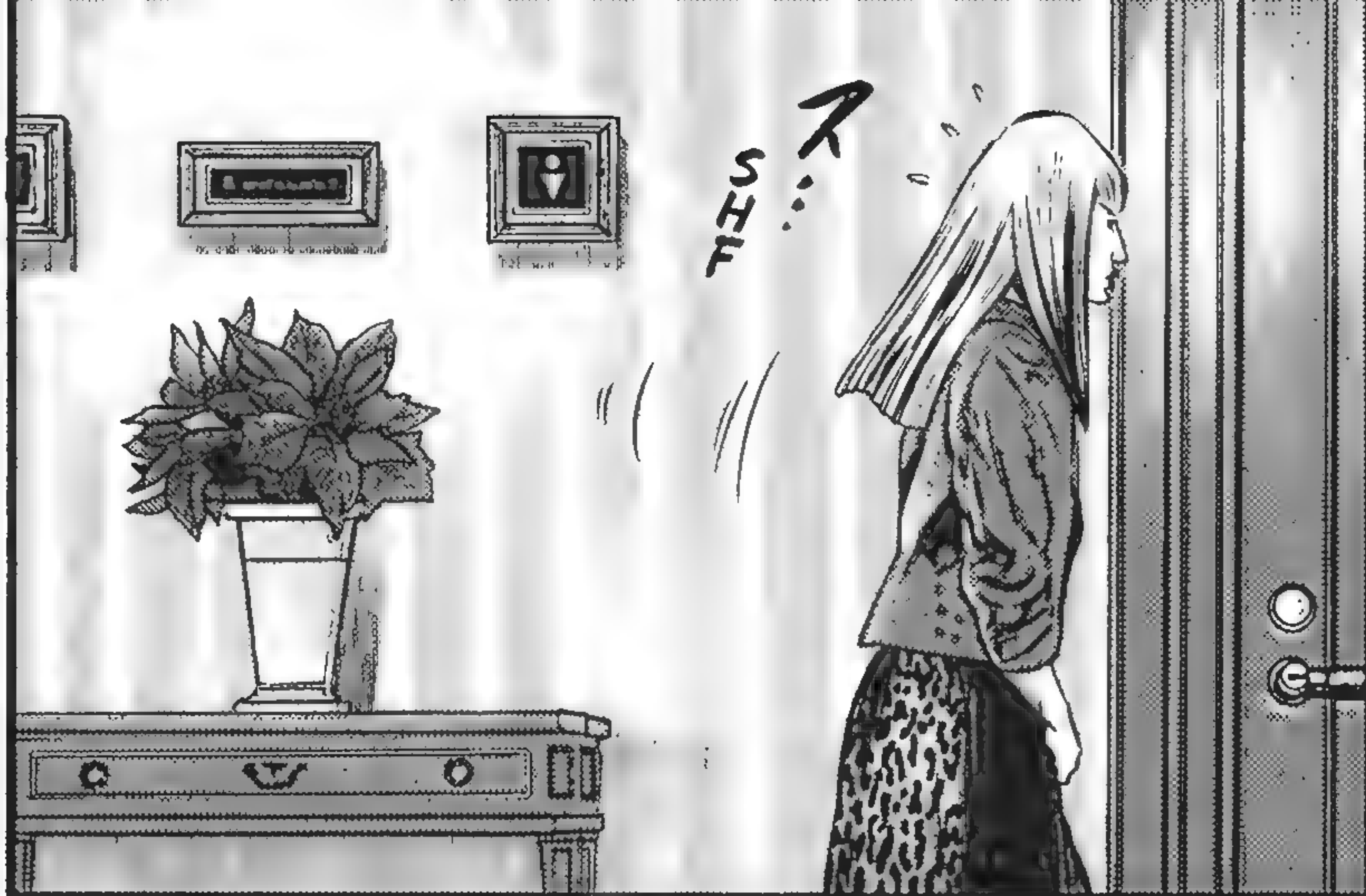
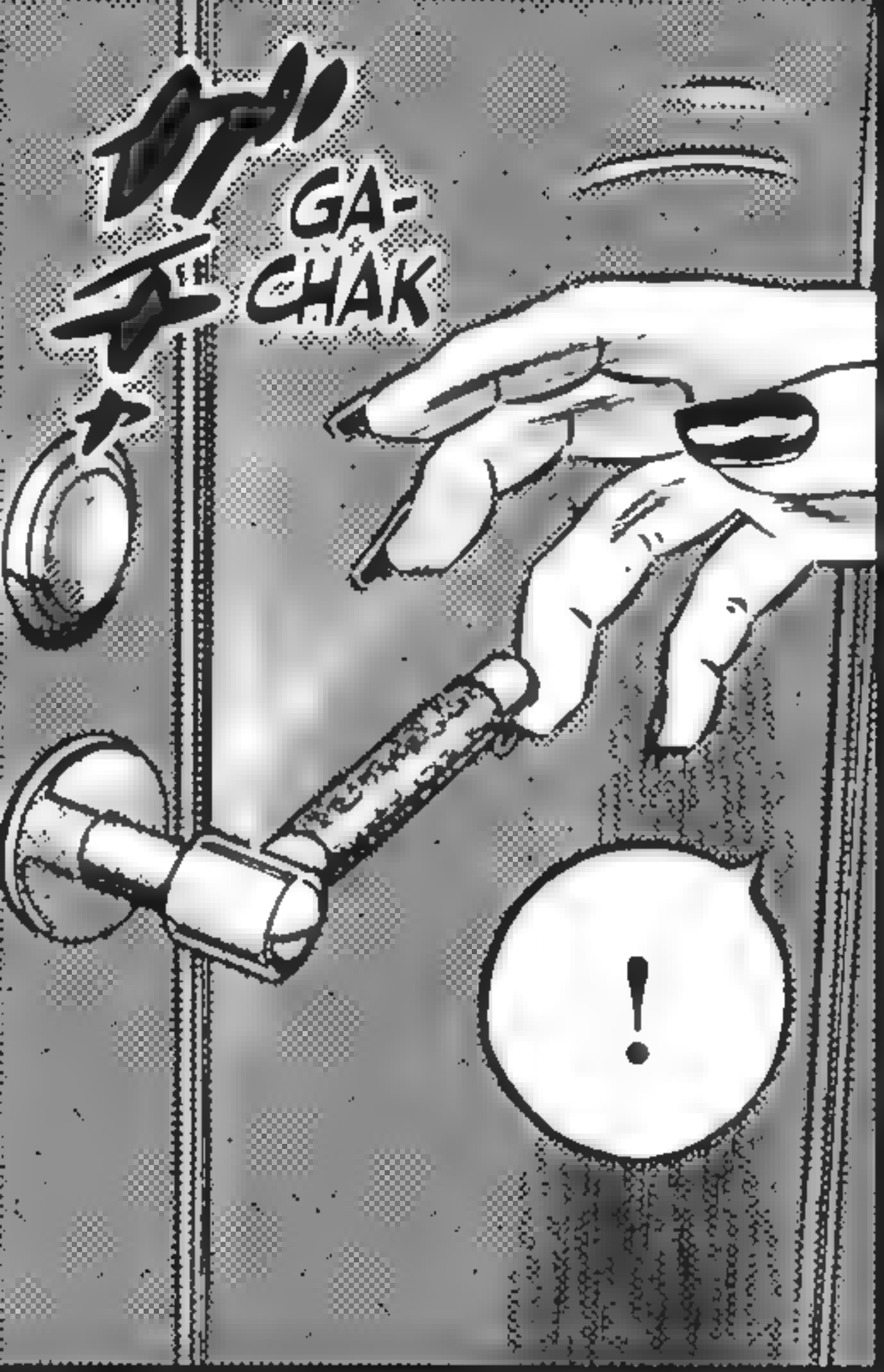


USING THE  
WOMEN'S  
WOULD BE  
ILLEGAL,  
SO...



I  
GUESS...

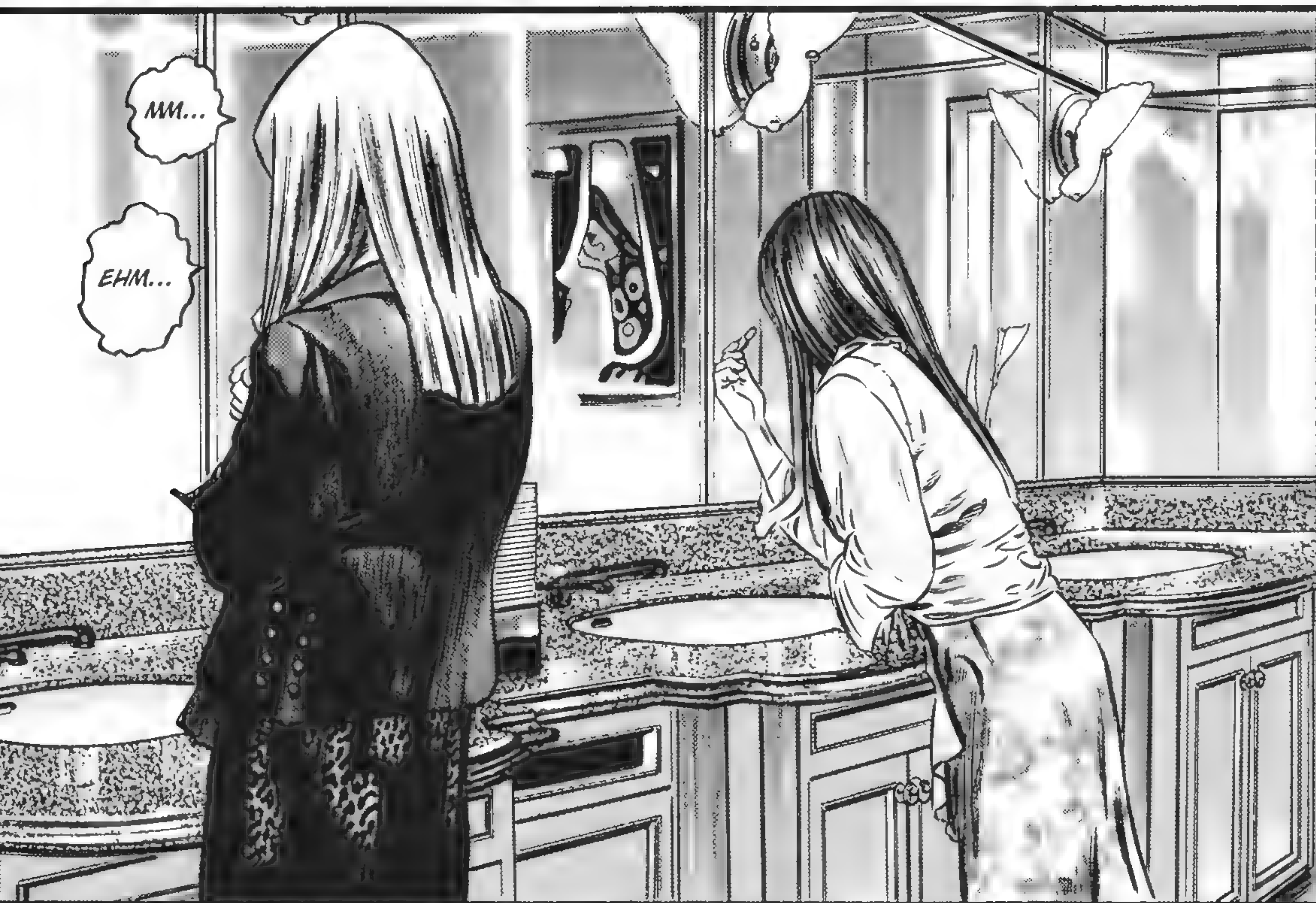




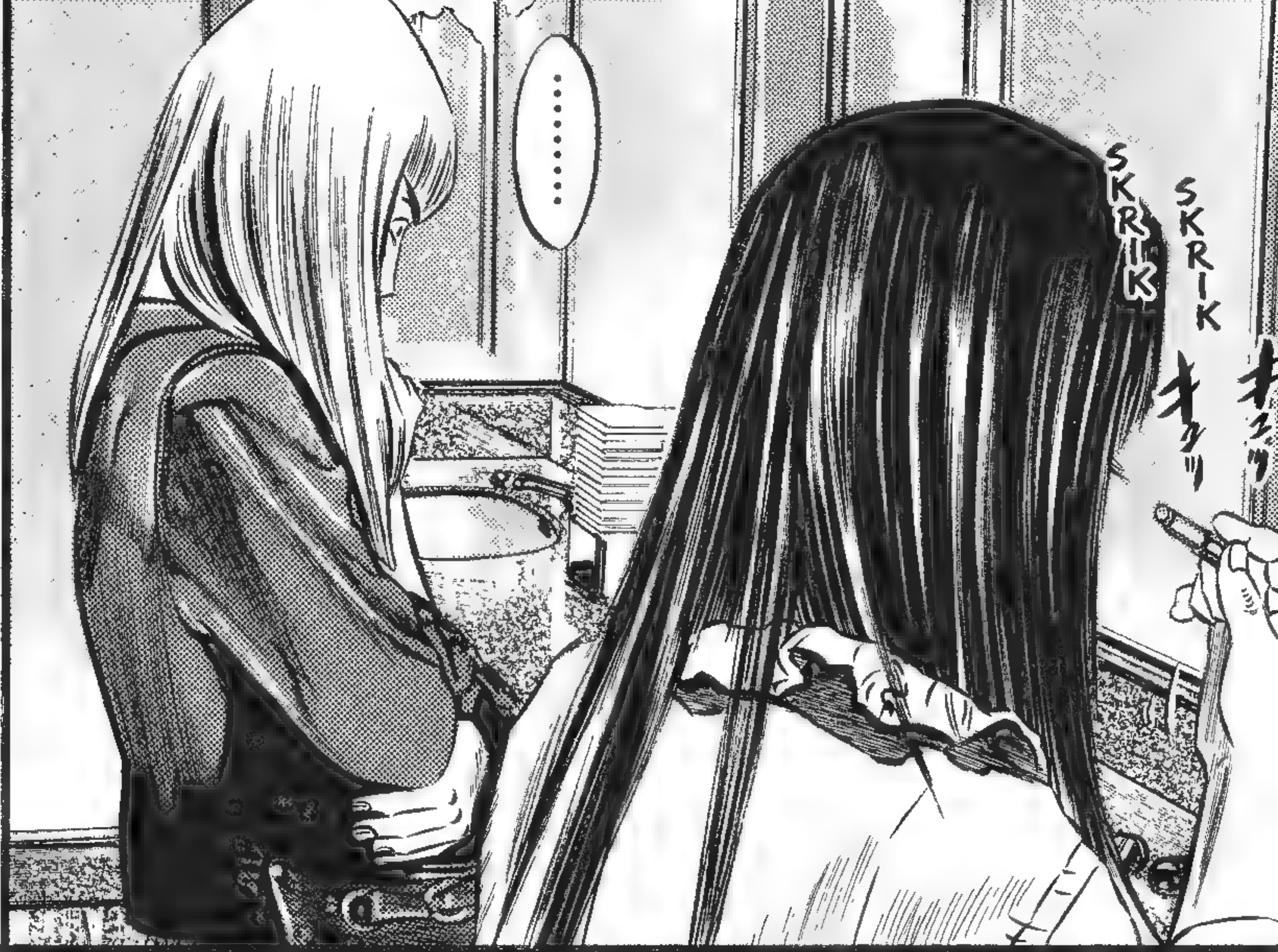








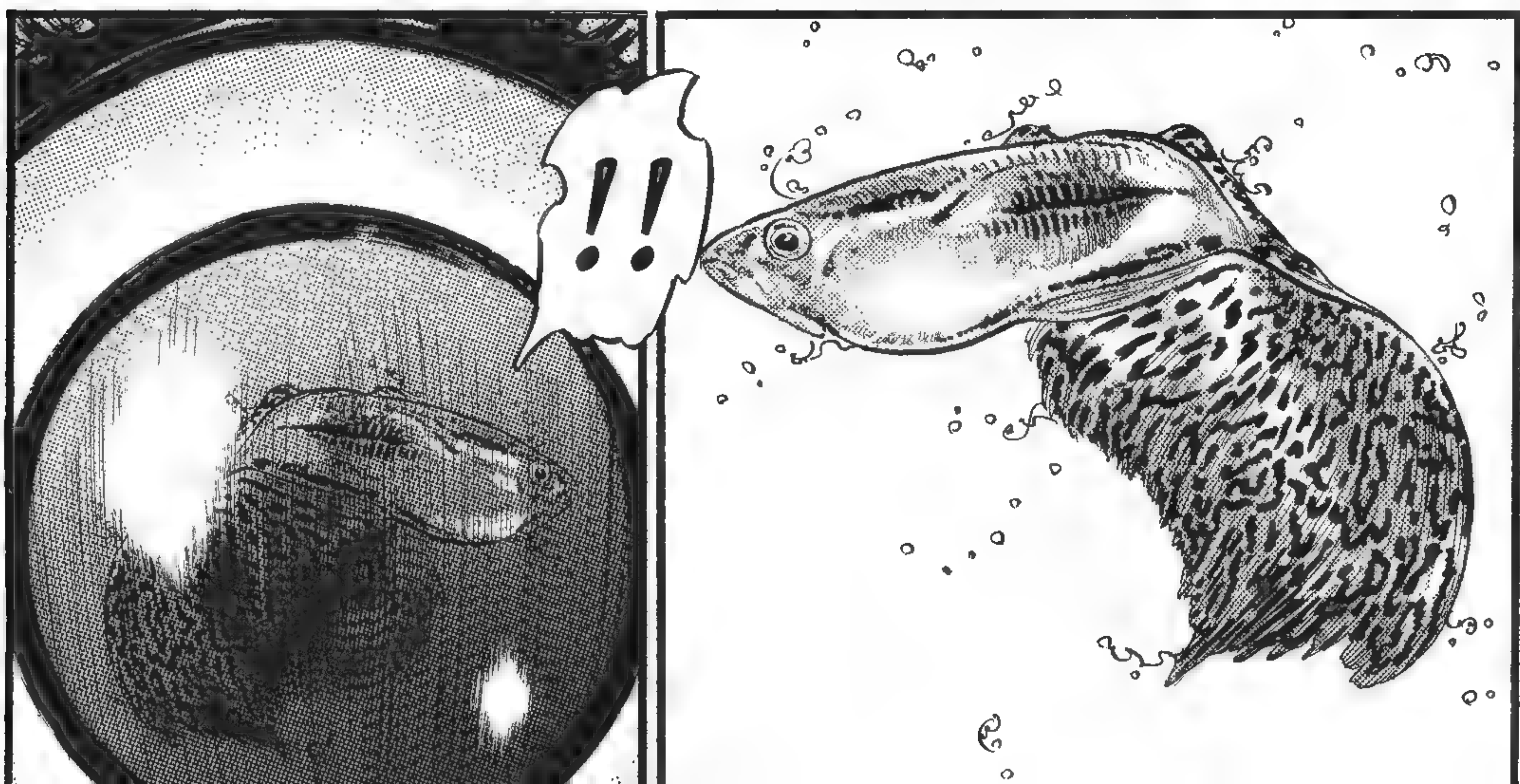








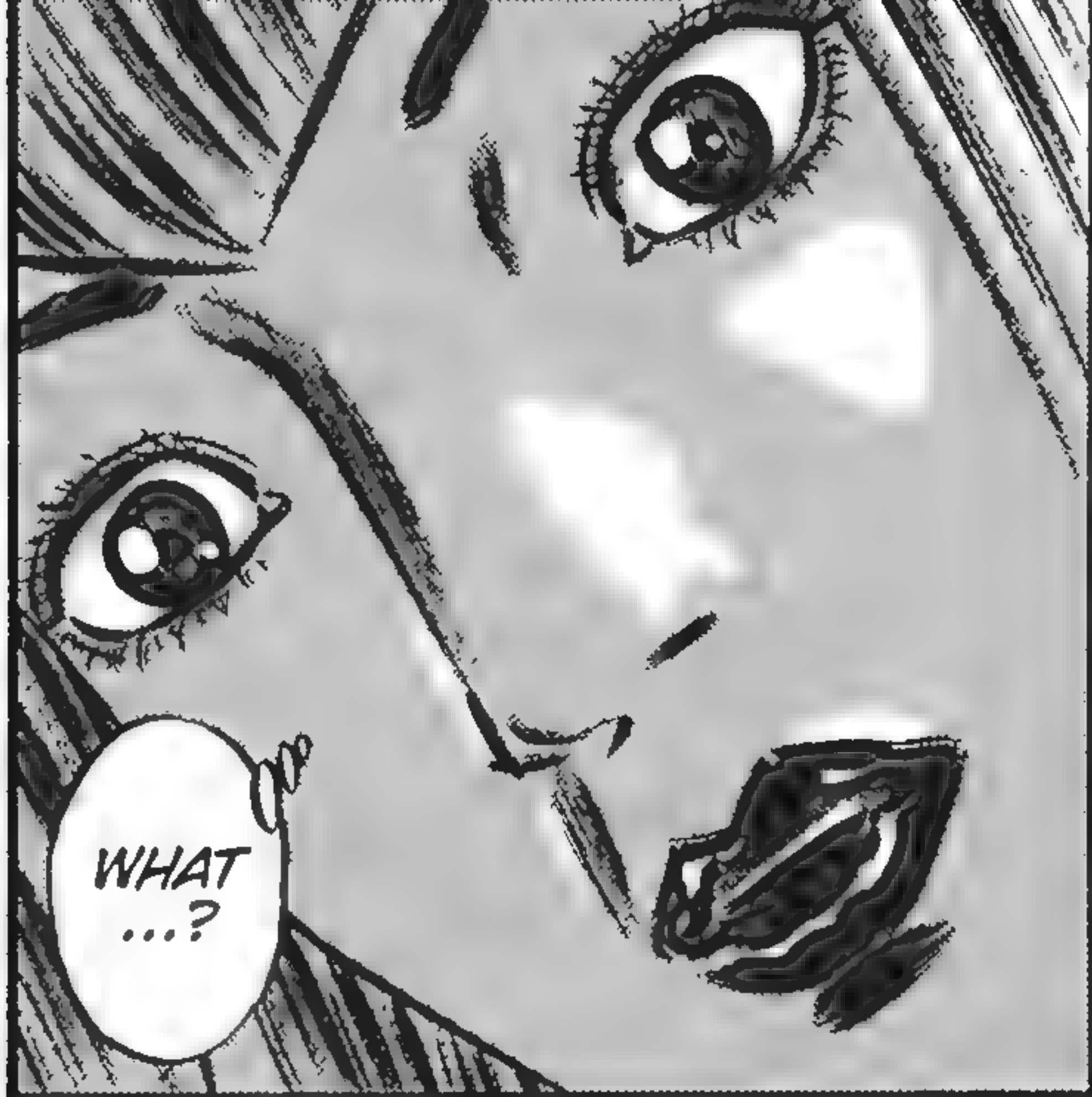












WHAT  
...?



?



BUT I  
FEEL...  
LIGHTER  
SOMEHOW!



I MUST BE  
DRUNKER  
THAN I  
THOUGHT.

...



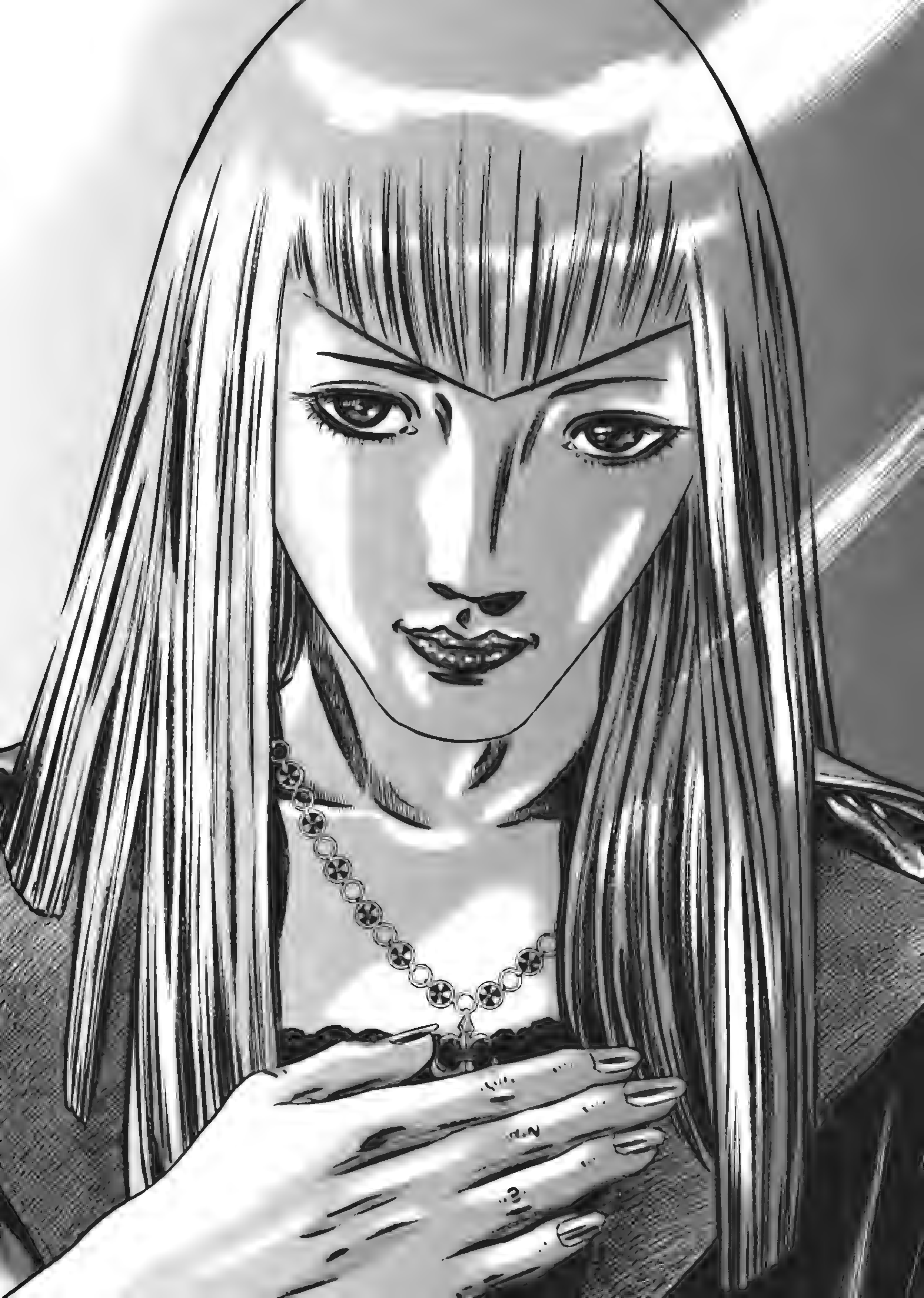
IT'S THE  
STRANGEST  
THING...

AND  
YET...

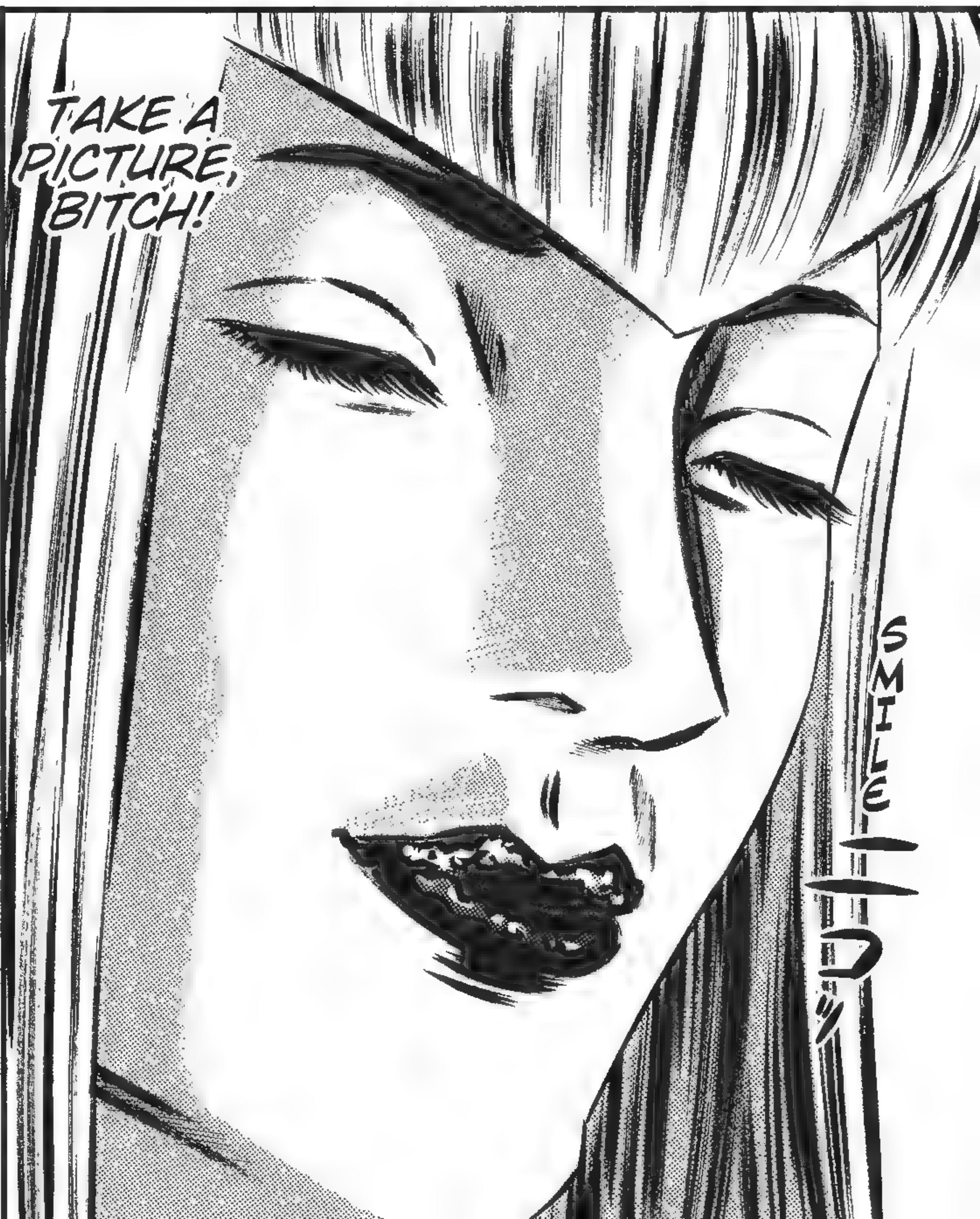
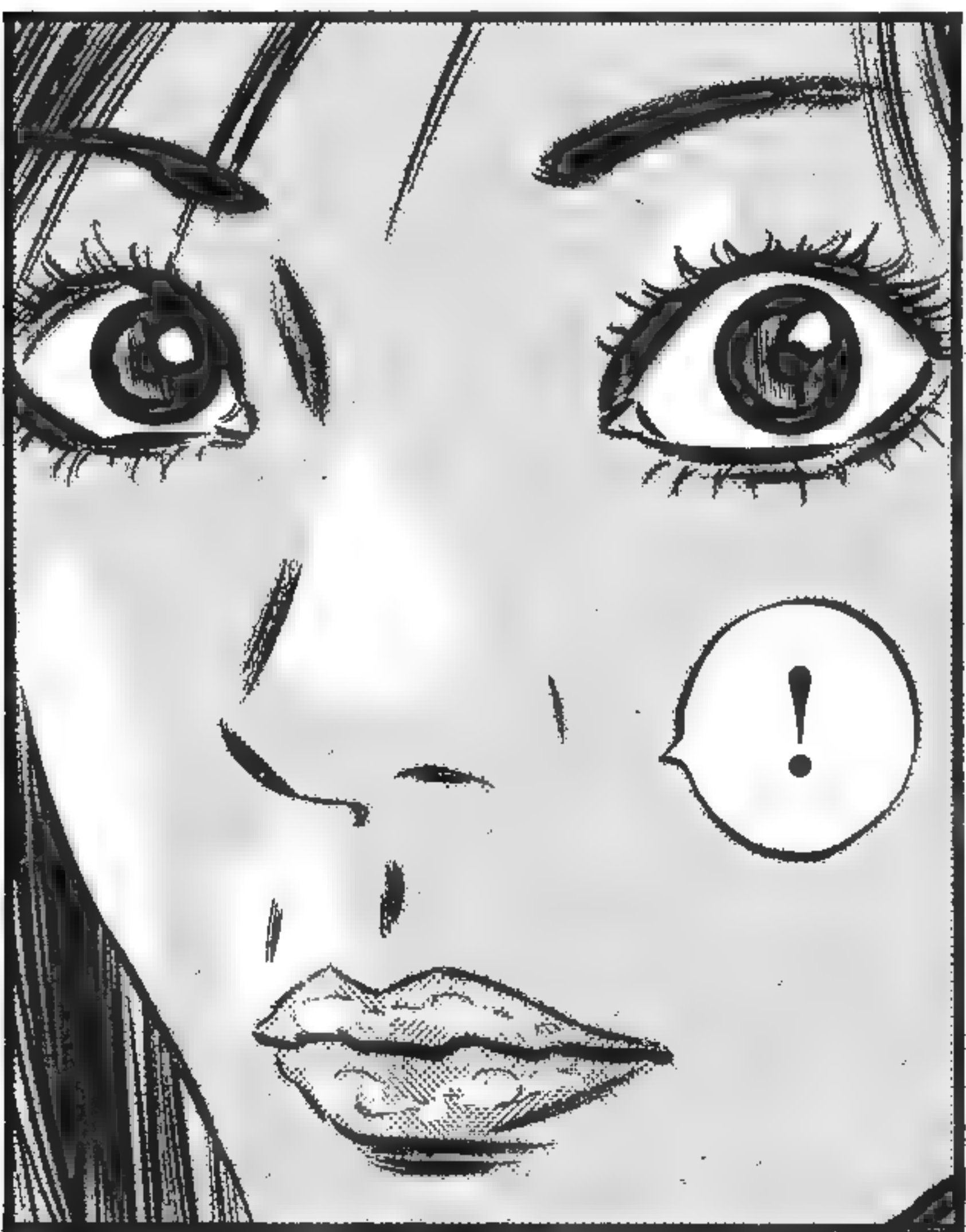
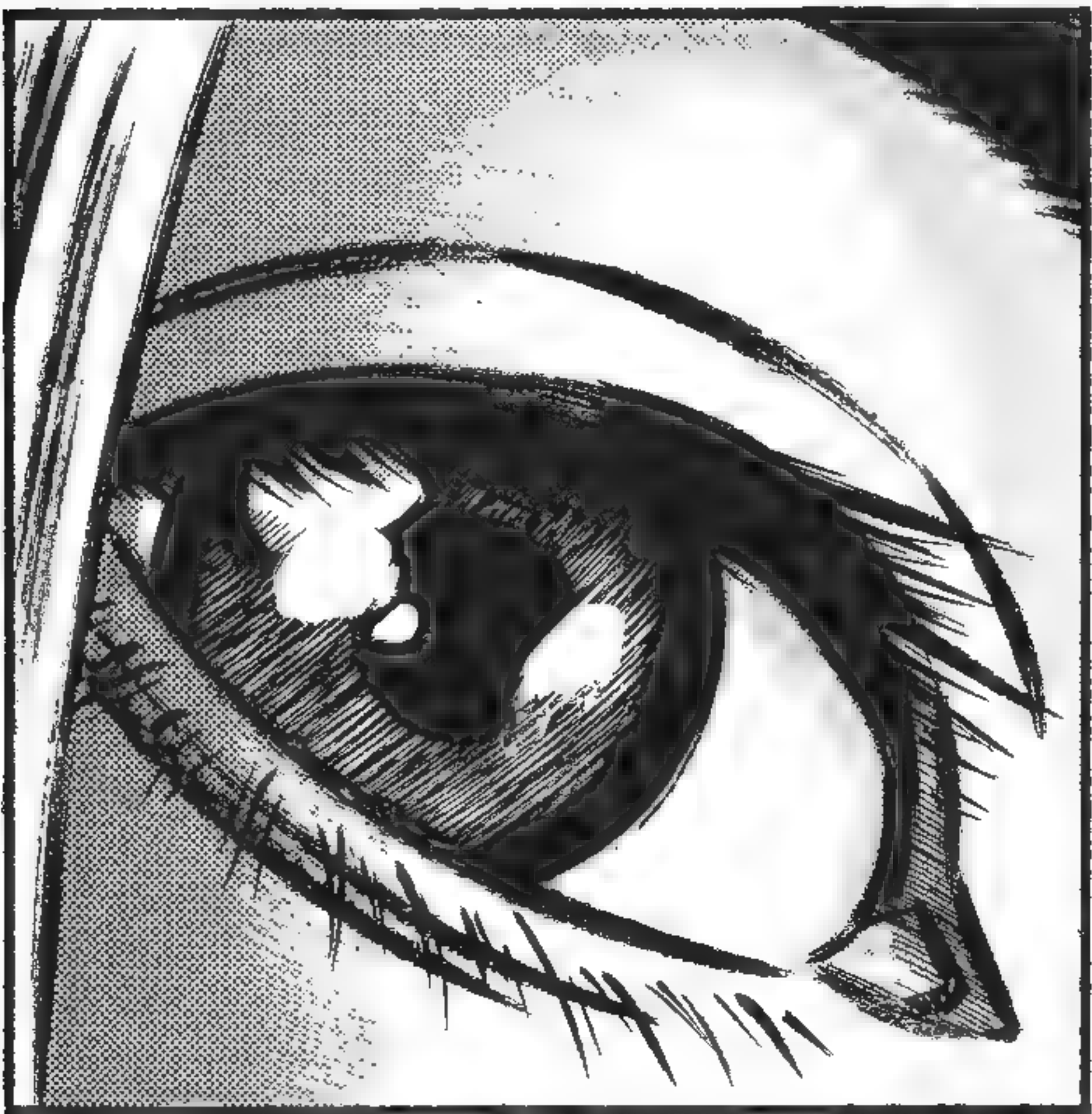


!







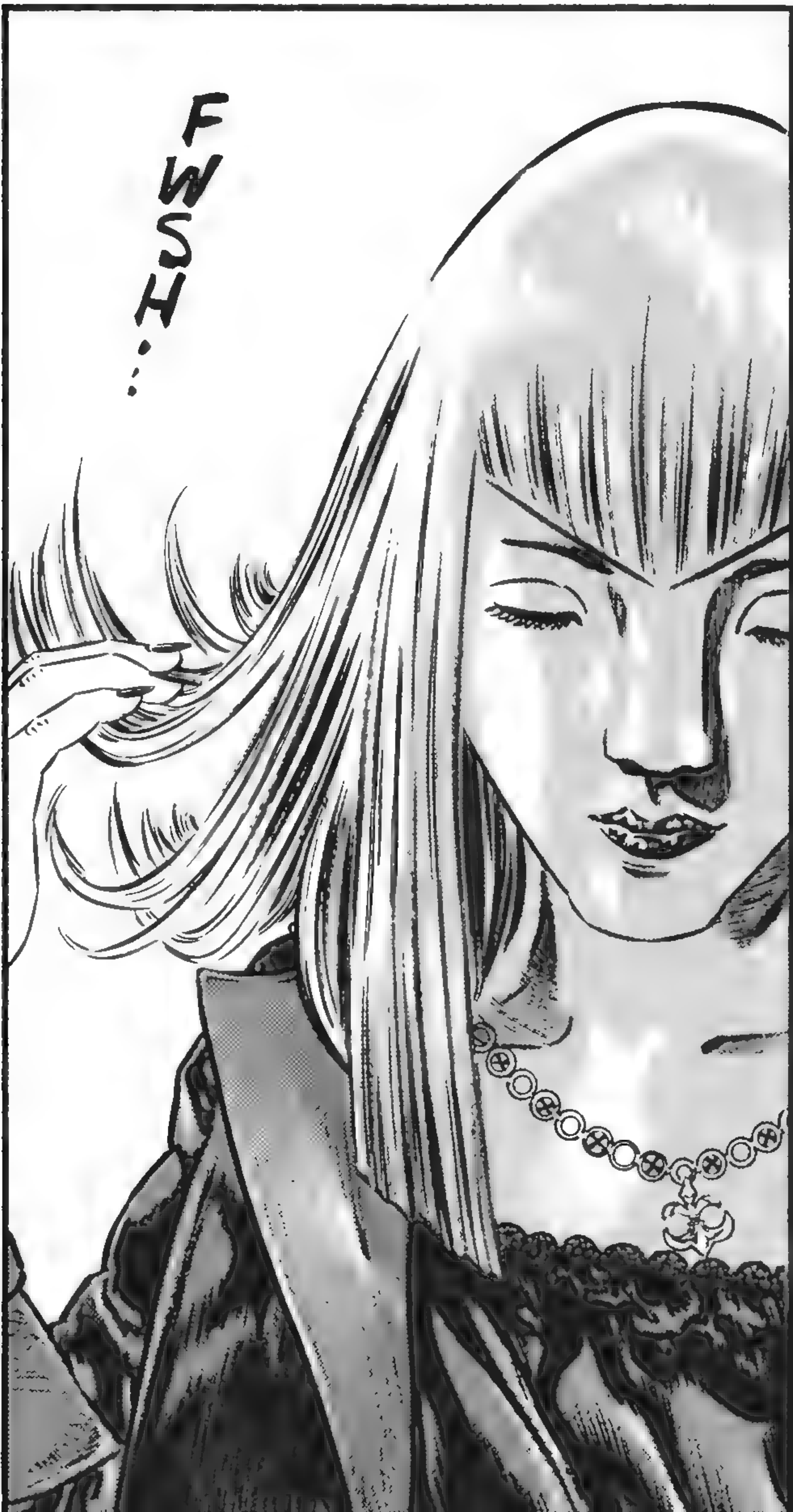




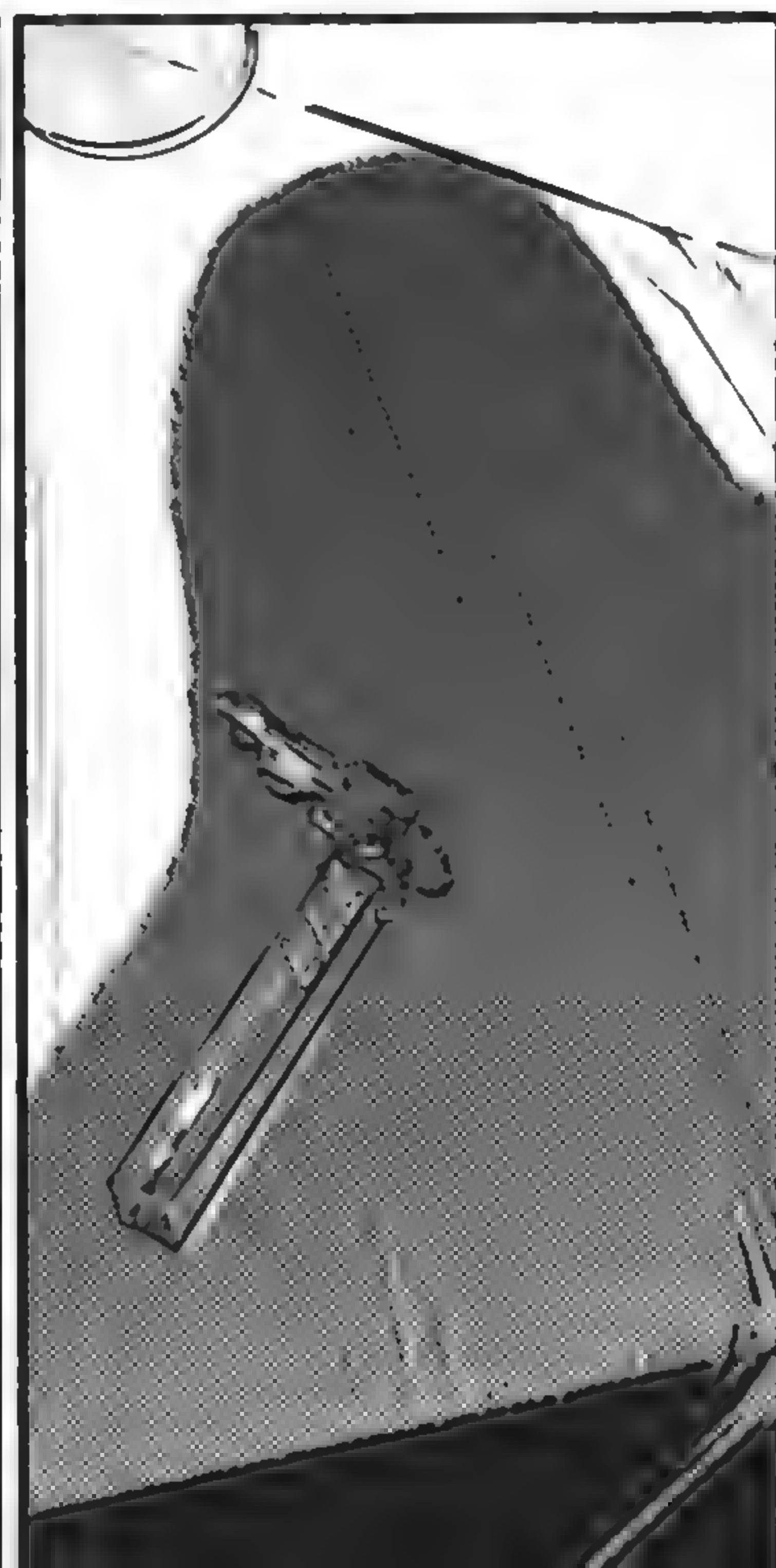
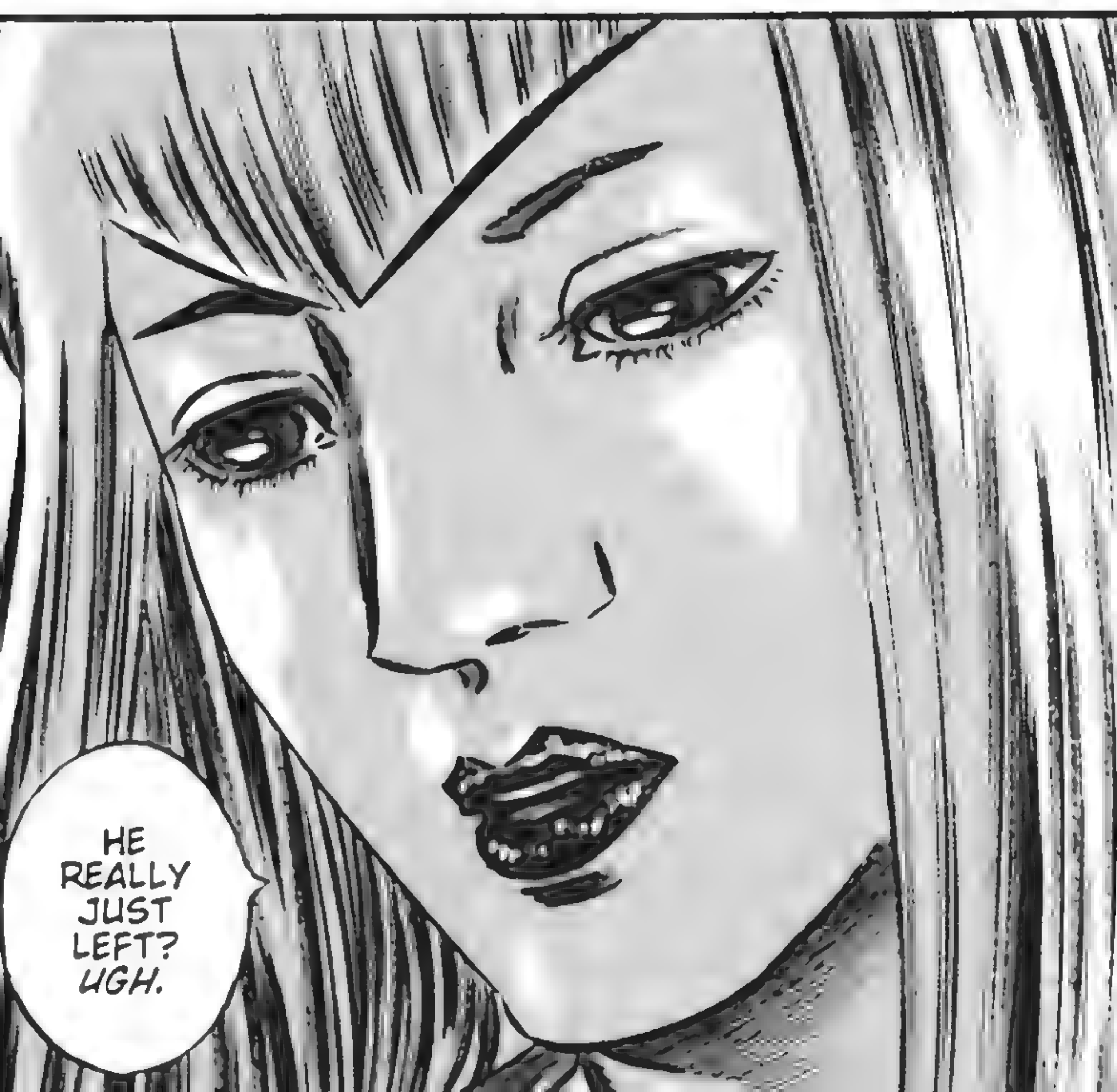


♪ HM-  
HMM, ♪  
HM HM-  
HMMM-!  
♪

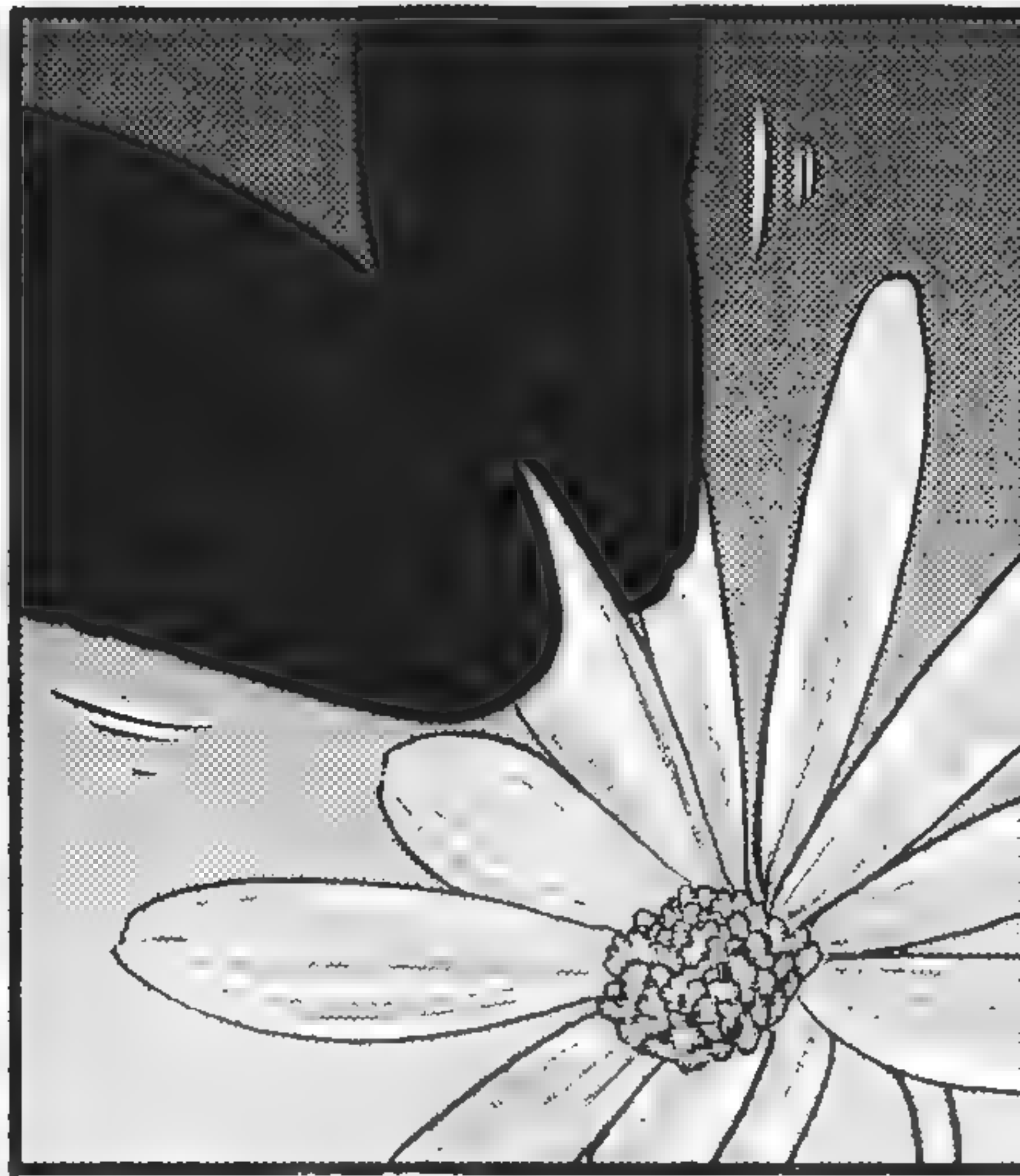
















WOMAN.

MAN.

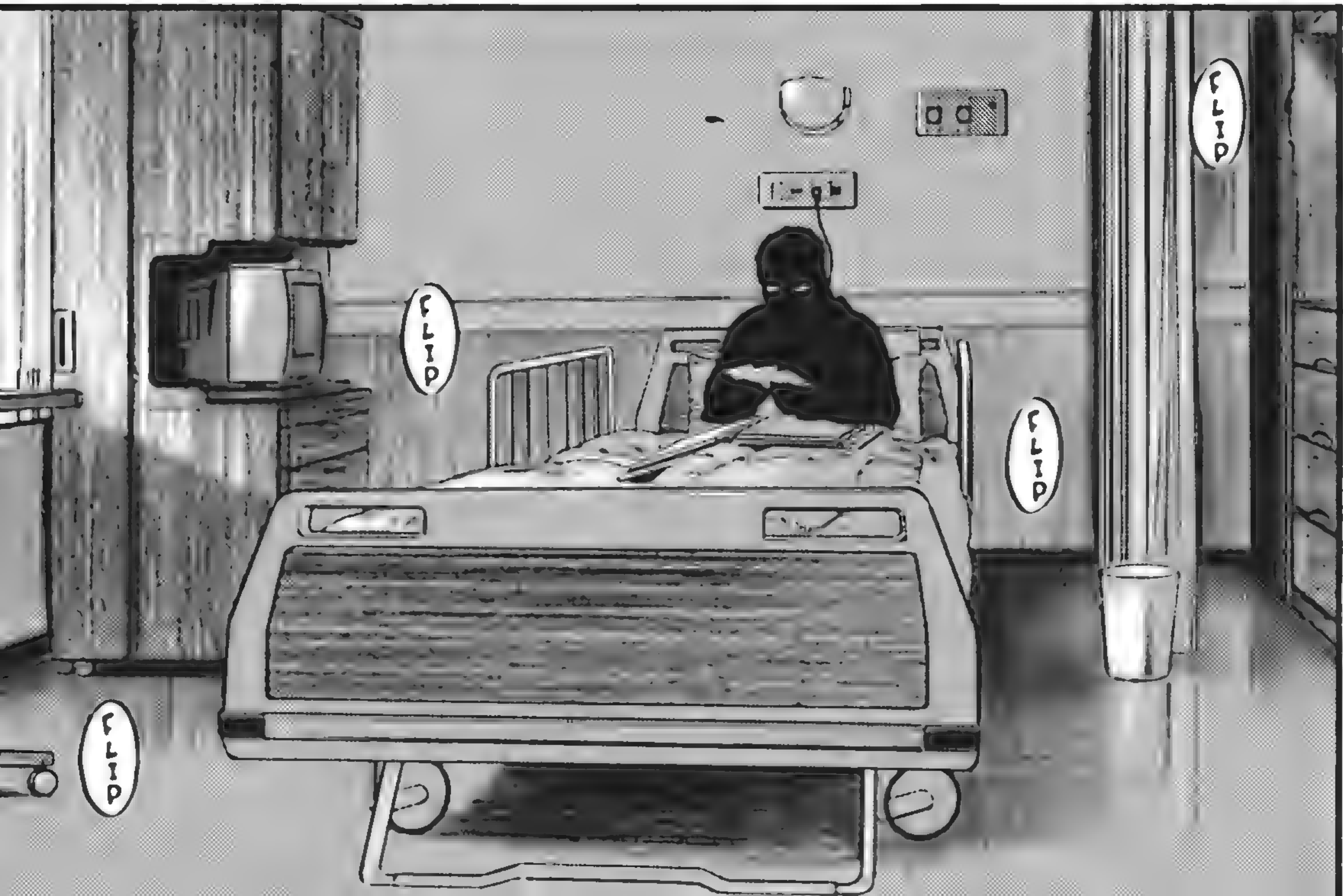
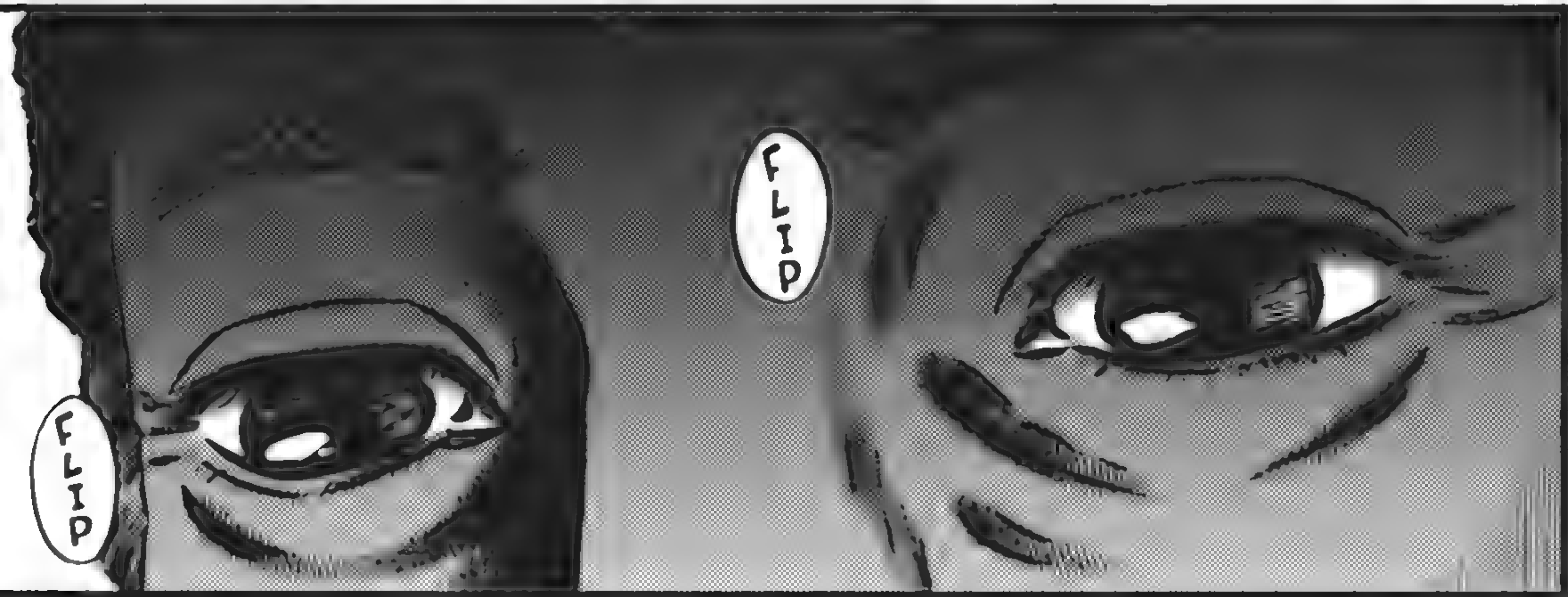
MAN.

WOMAN.

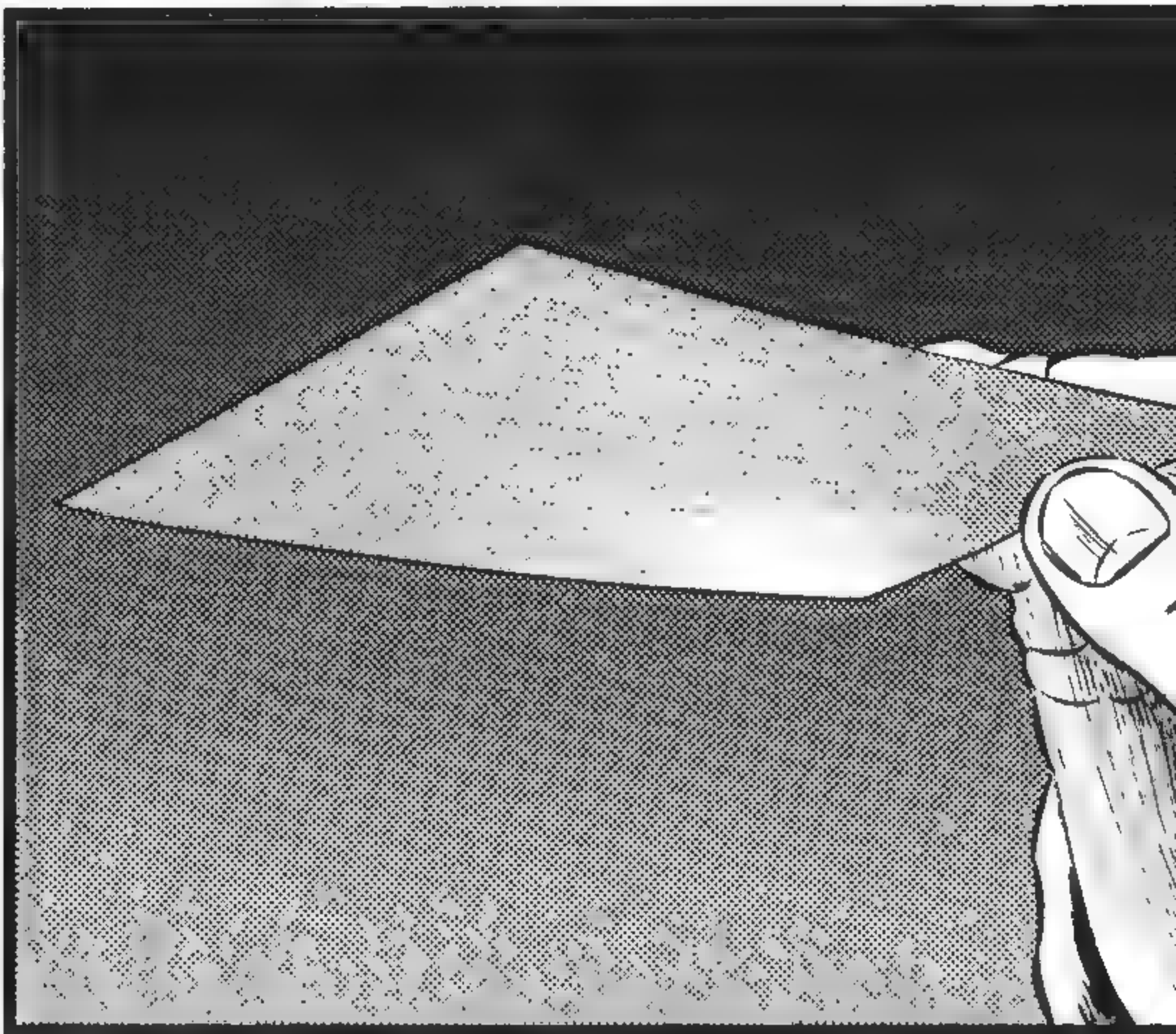
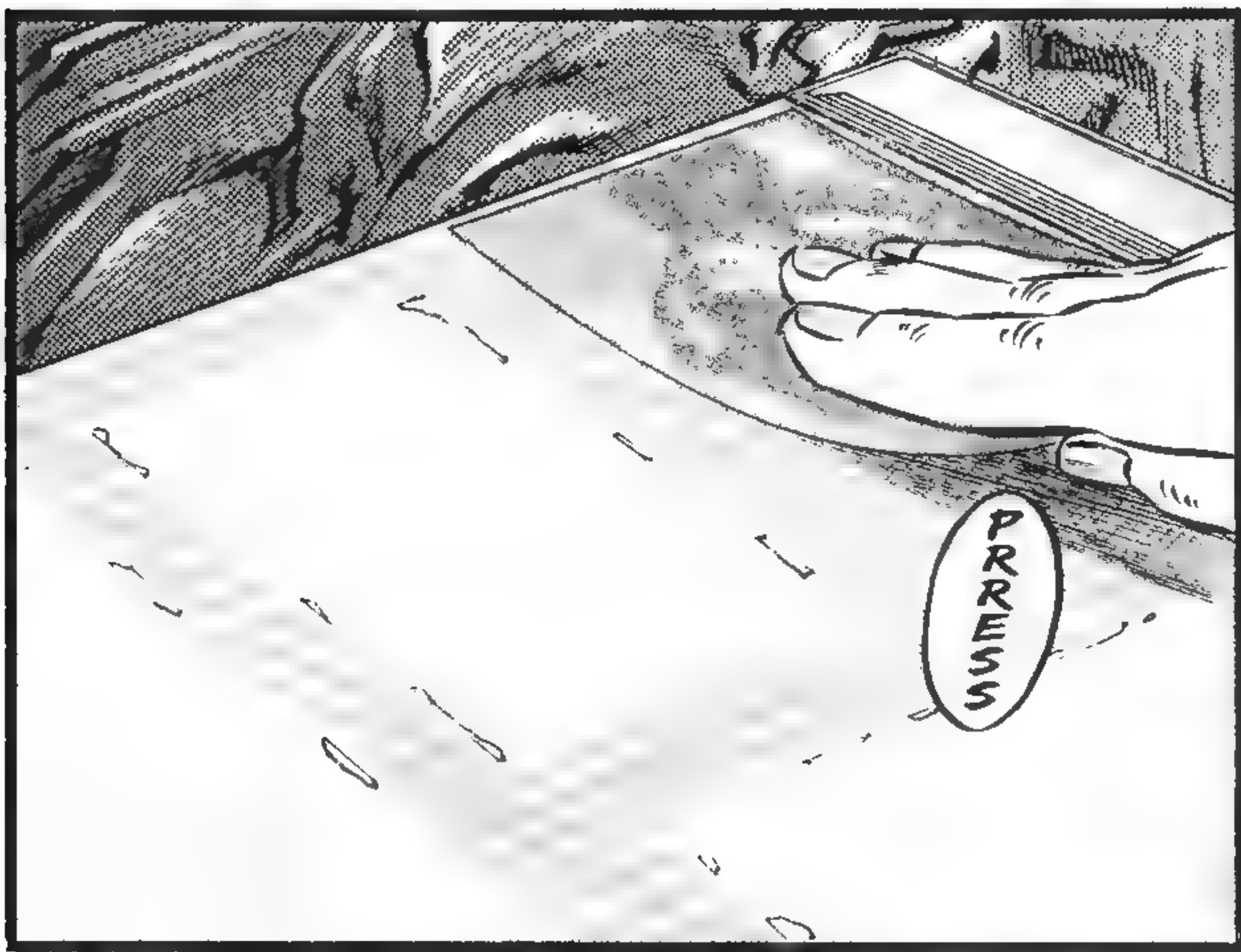




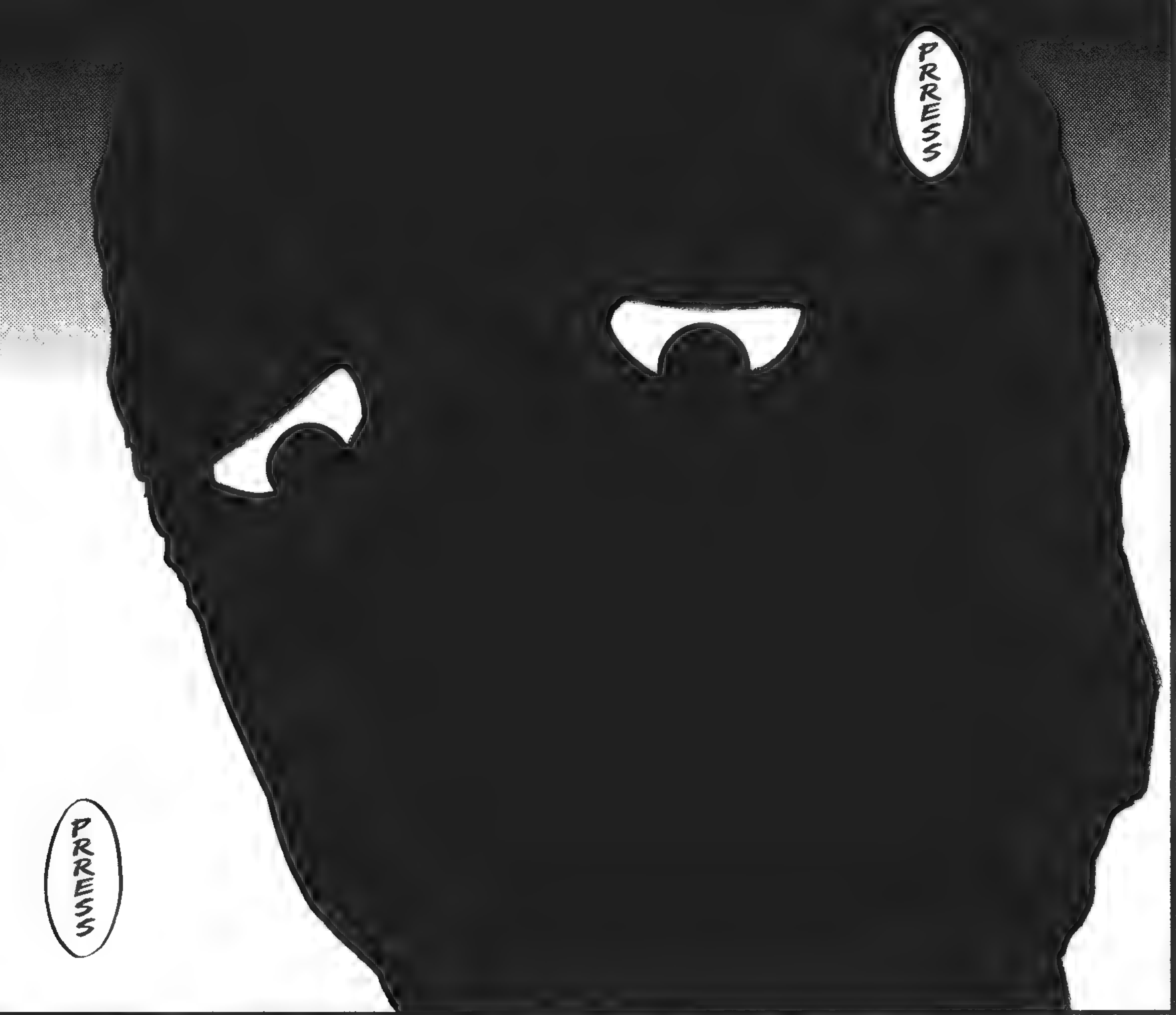




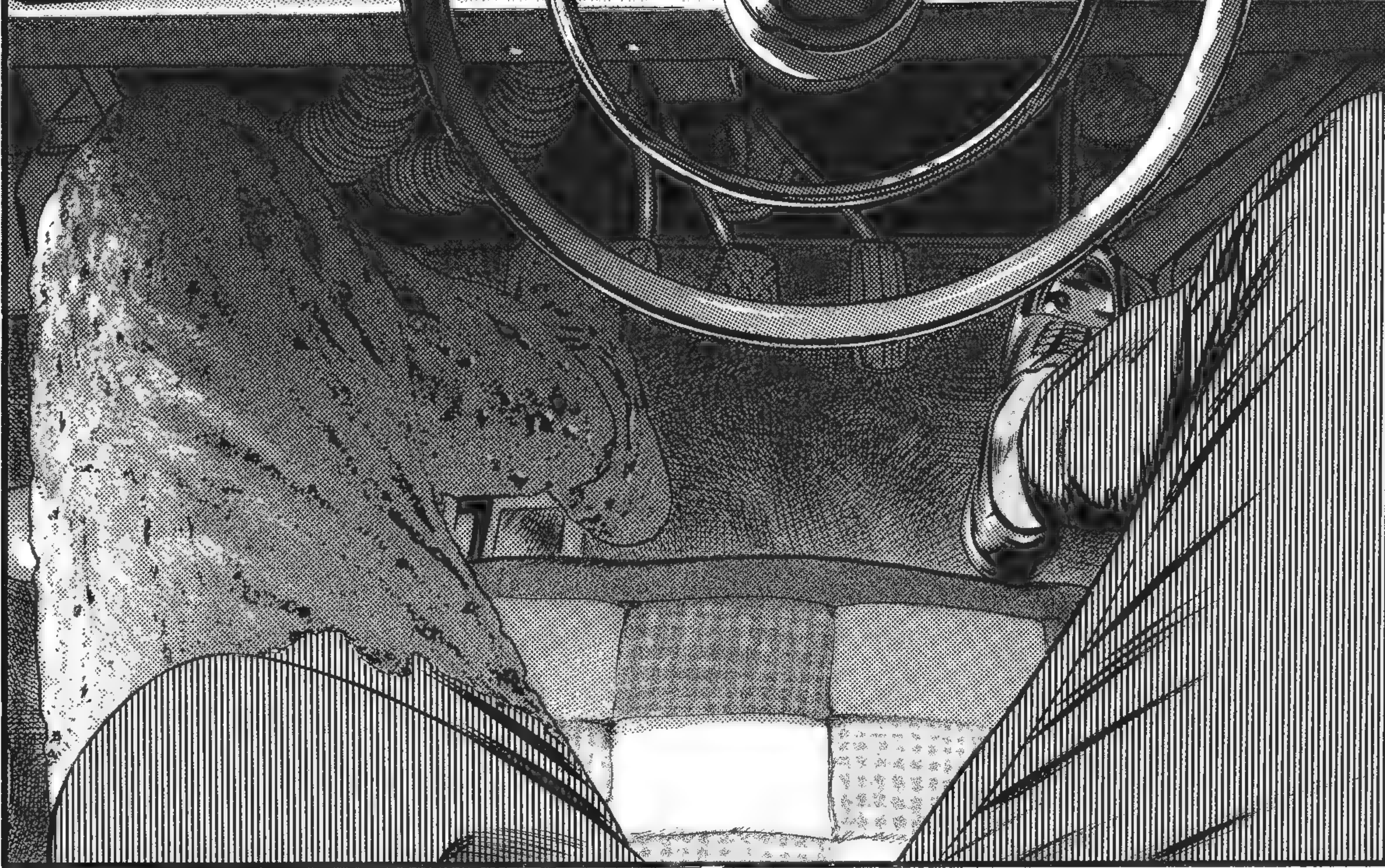




















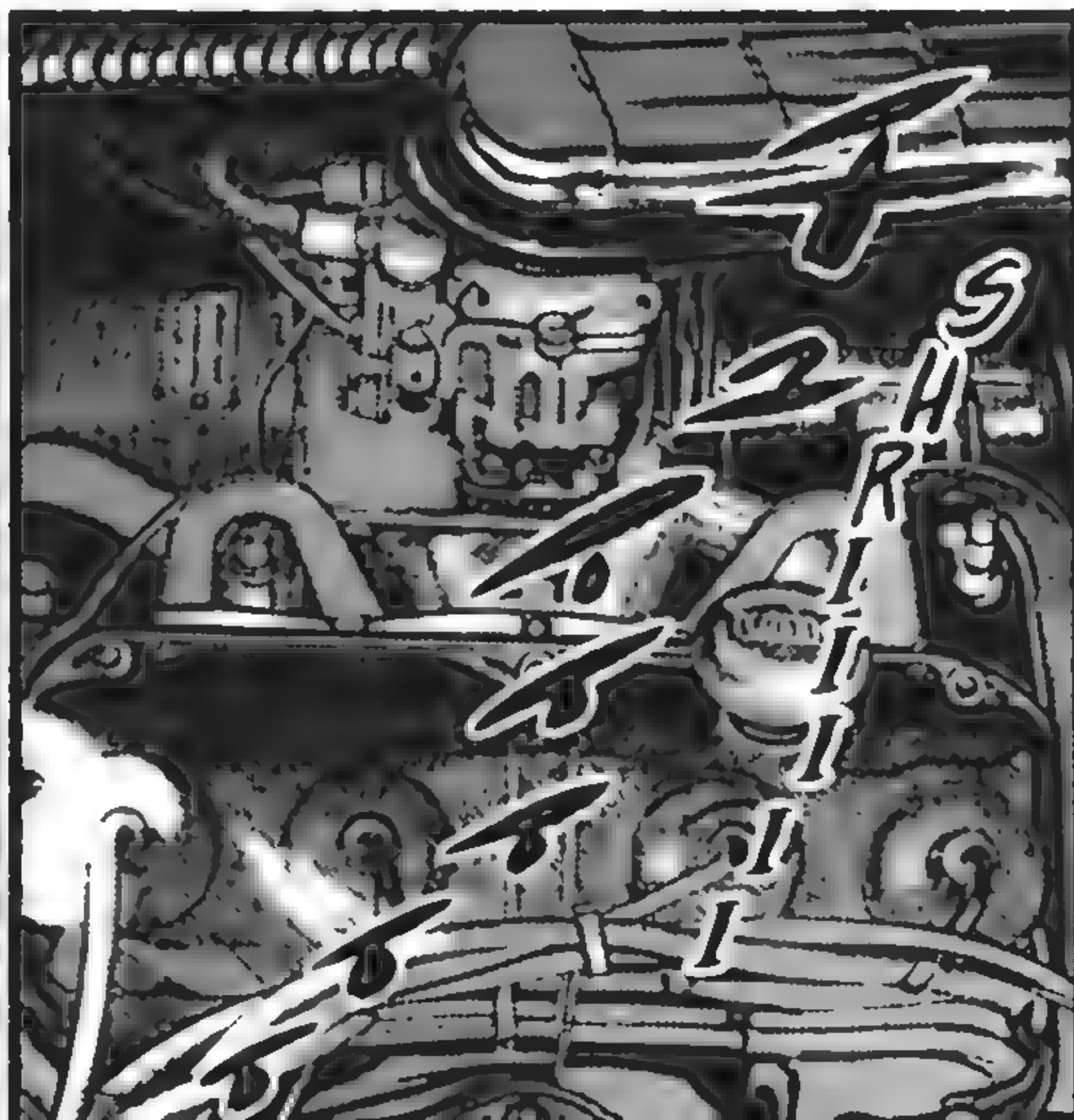
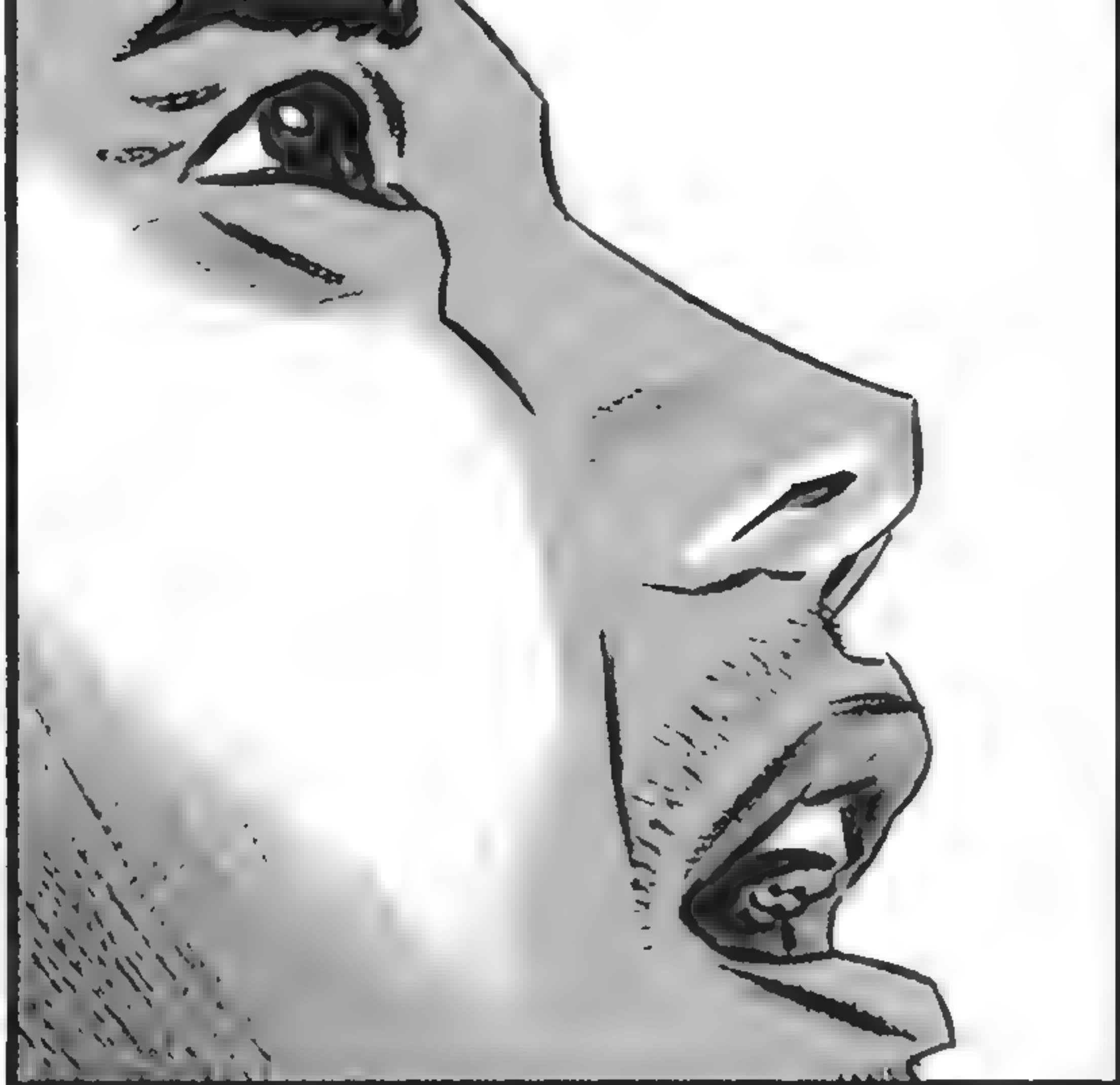


















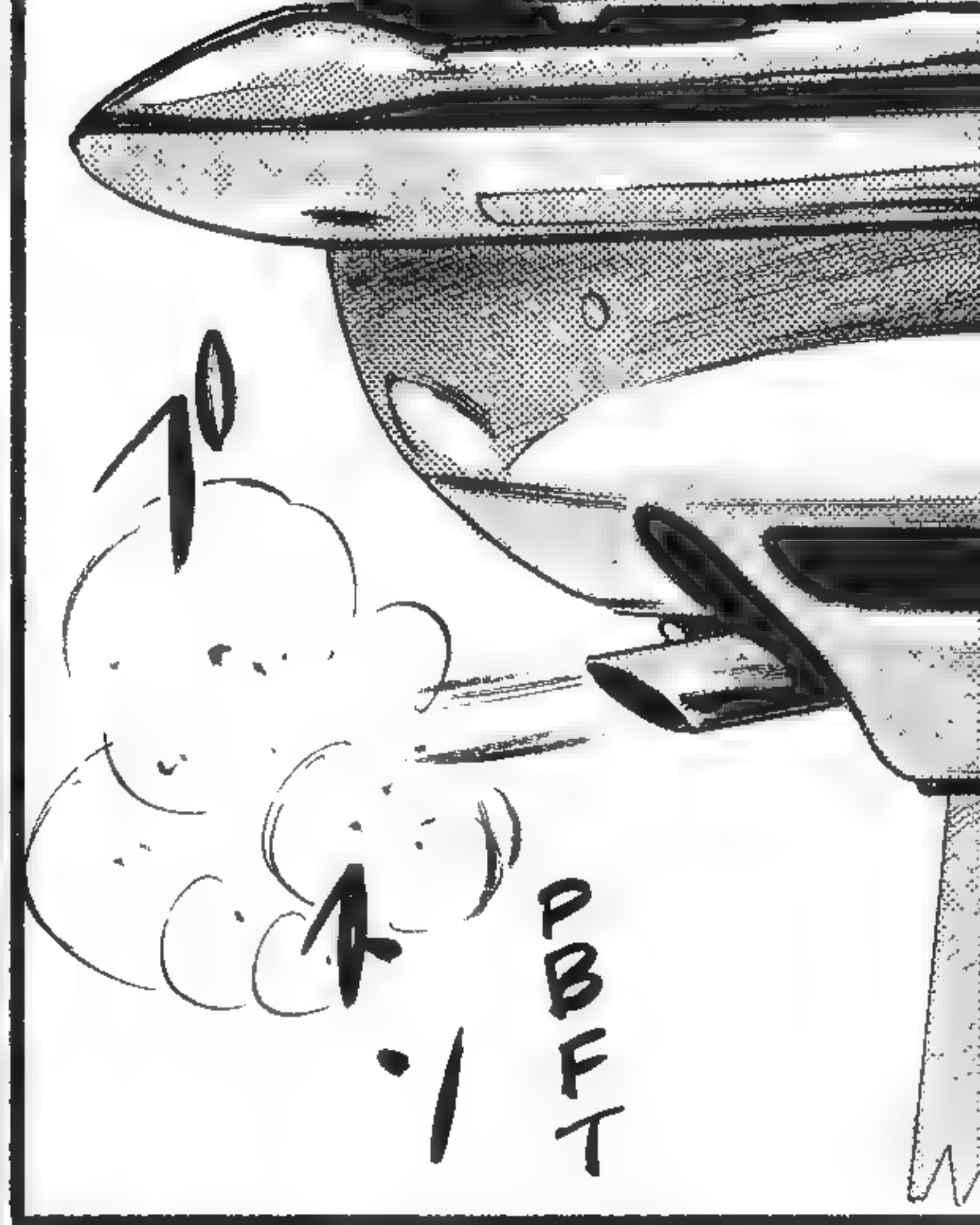






HM?

BLINK



70

PFFT

PFFT



PFFT



NO CLUE  
WHAT SHE'S  
FEELING...



...?  
?



I'M  
STUMPED.

SHIT.





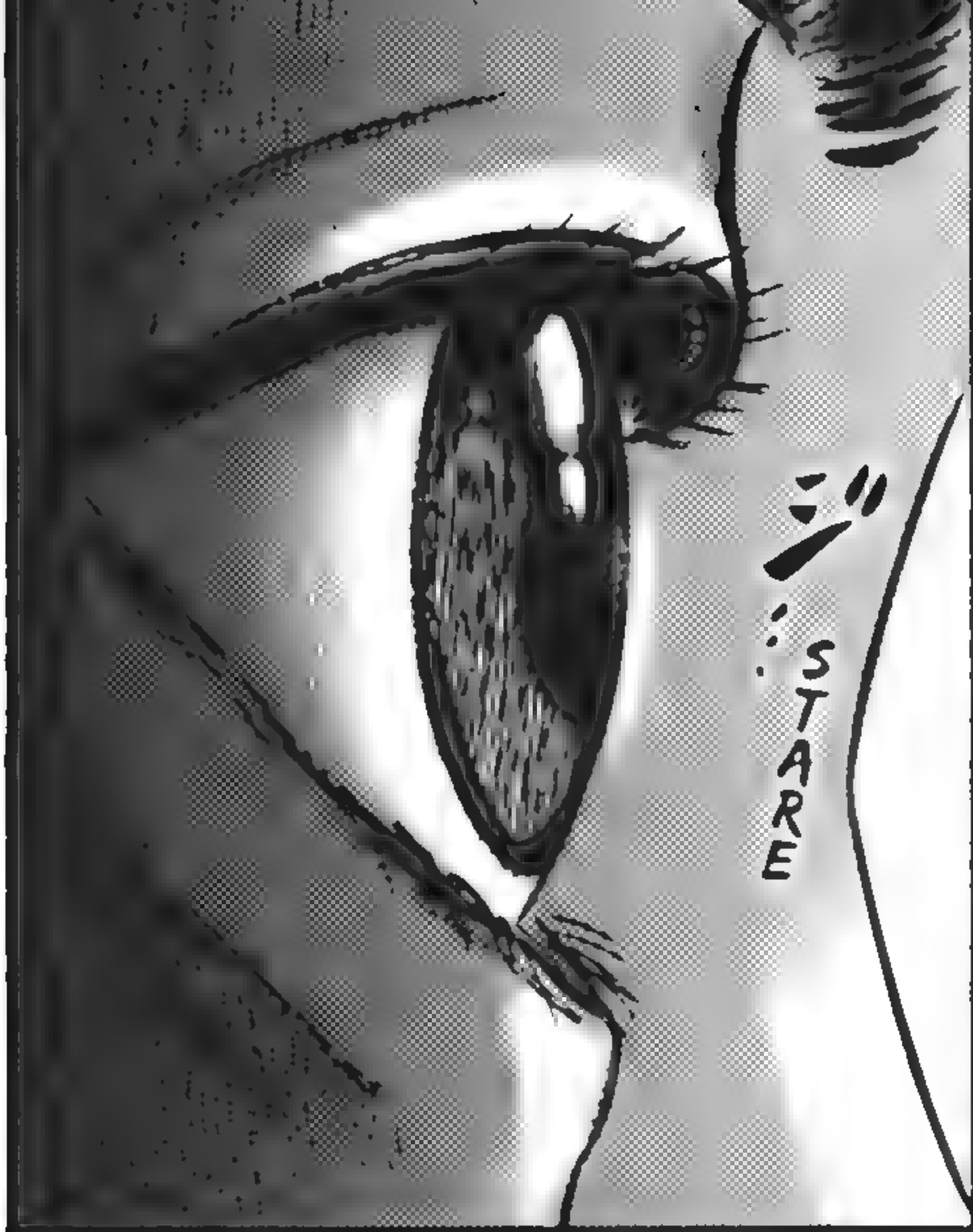
















I CAN'T  
REMEM-  
BER.



ARE  
MY  
EYES.

THE ONLY  
THINGS  
LEFT  
FROM  
MY OLD  
FACE...



.....





AND  
IT'S NOT  
JUST MY  
FACE.



HOW  
GROTESQUE  
WILL I MAKE  
MYSELF BY  
THE END?



SO MUCH OF  
ME HAS BEEN  
COMPLETELY  
SCRAMBLED.





COME TO  
THINK  
OF IT  
...



!



ITO'S  
WATER HASN'T  
TRANSFERRED  
TO ME YET.





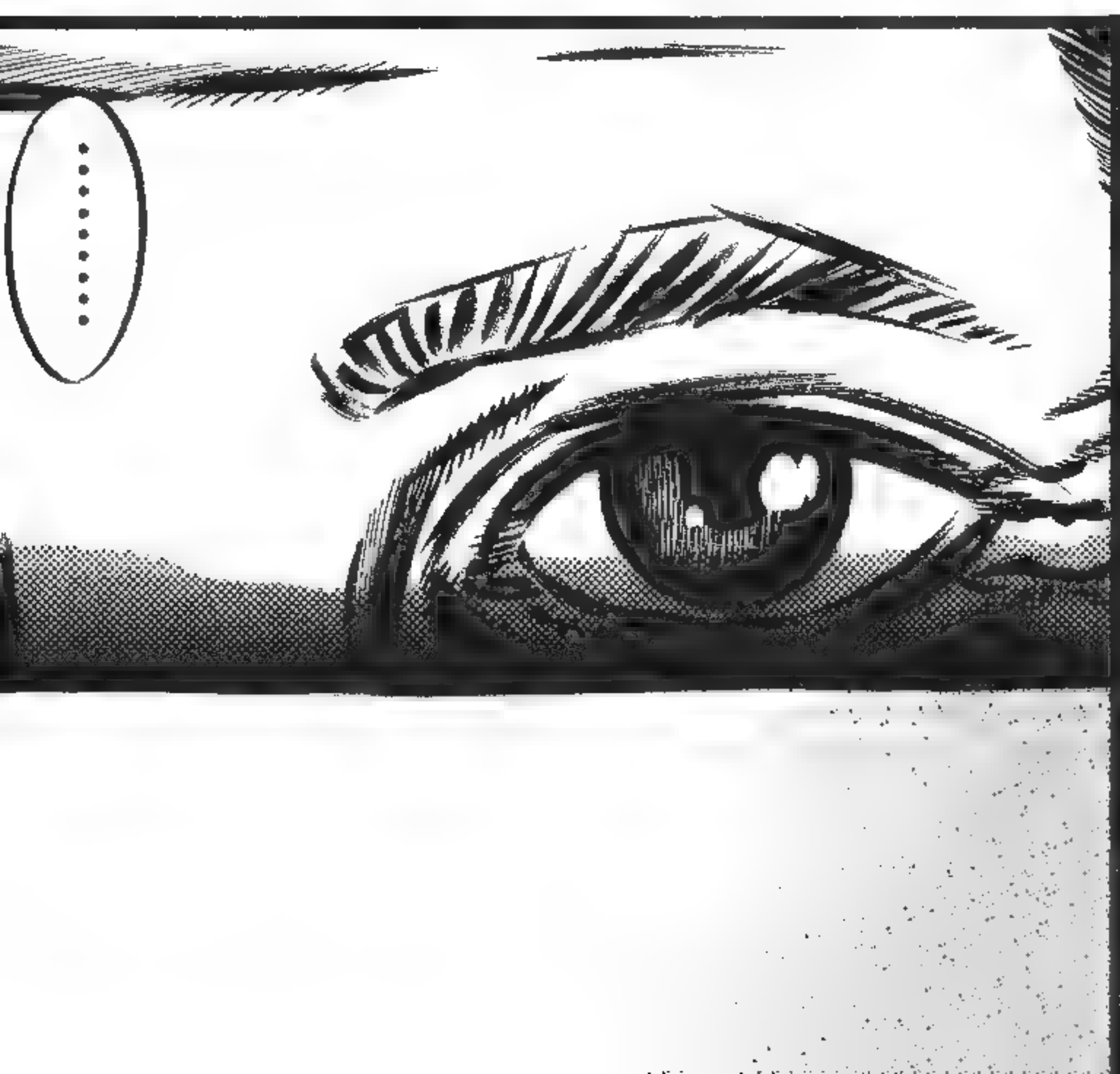
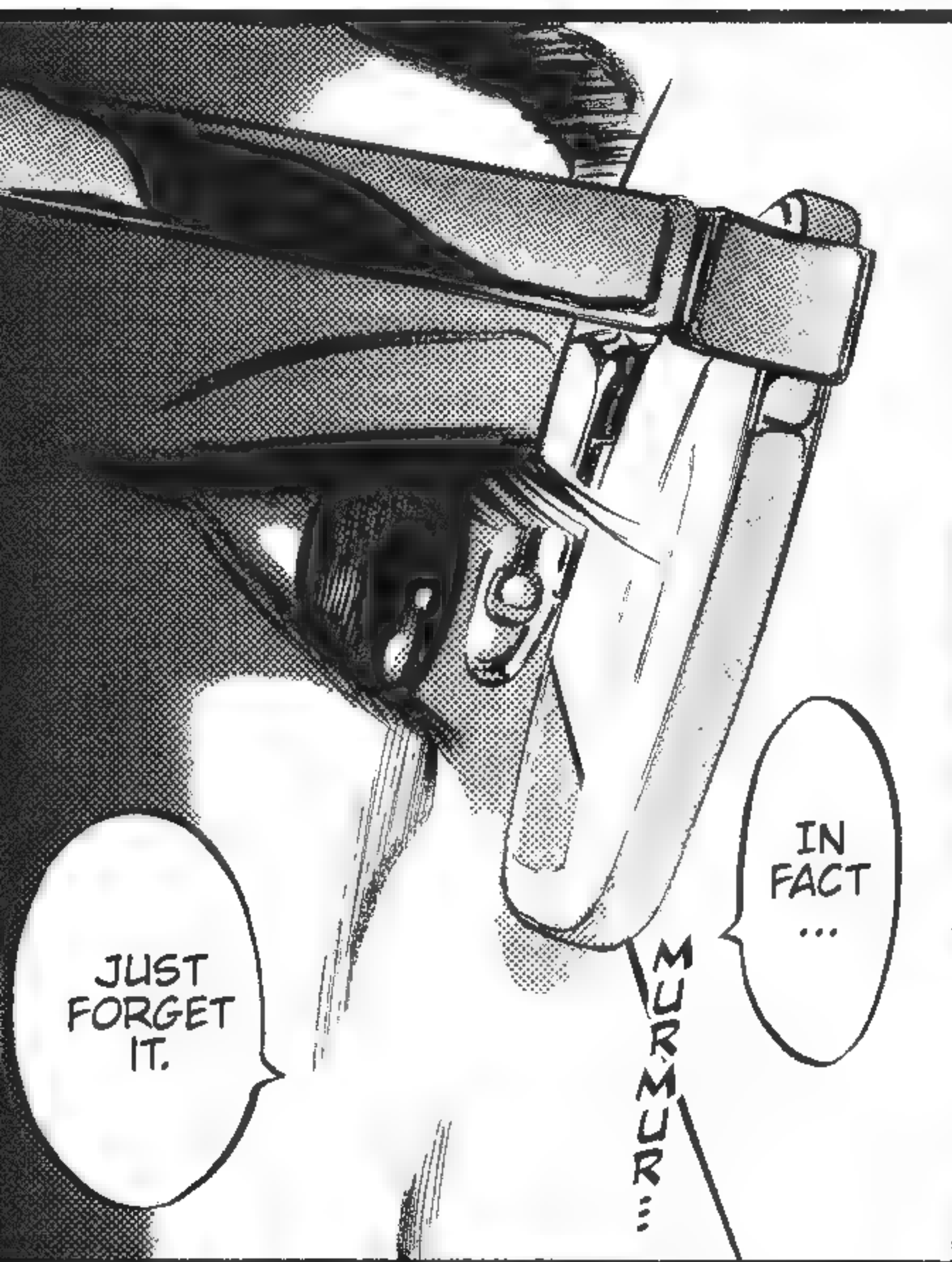
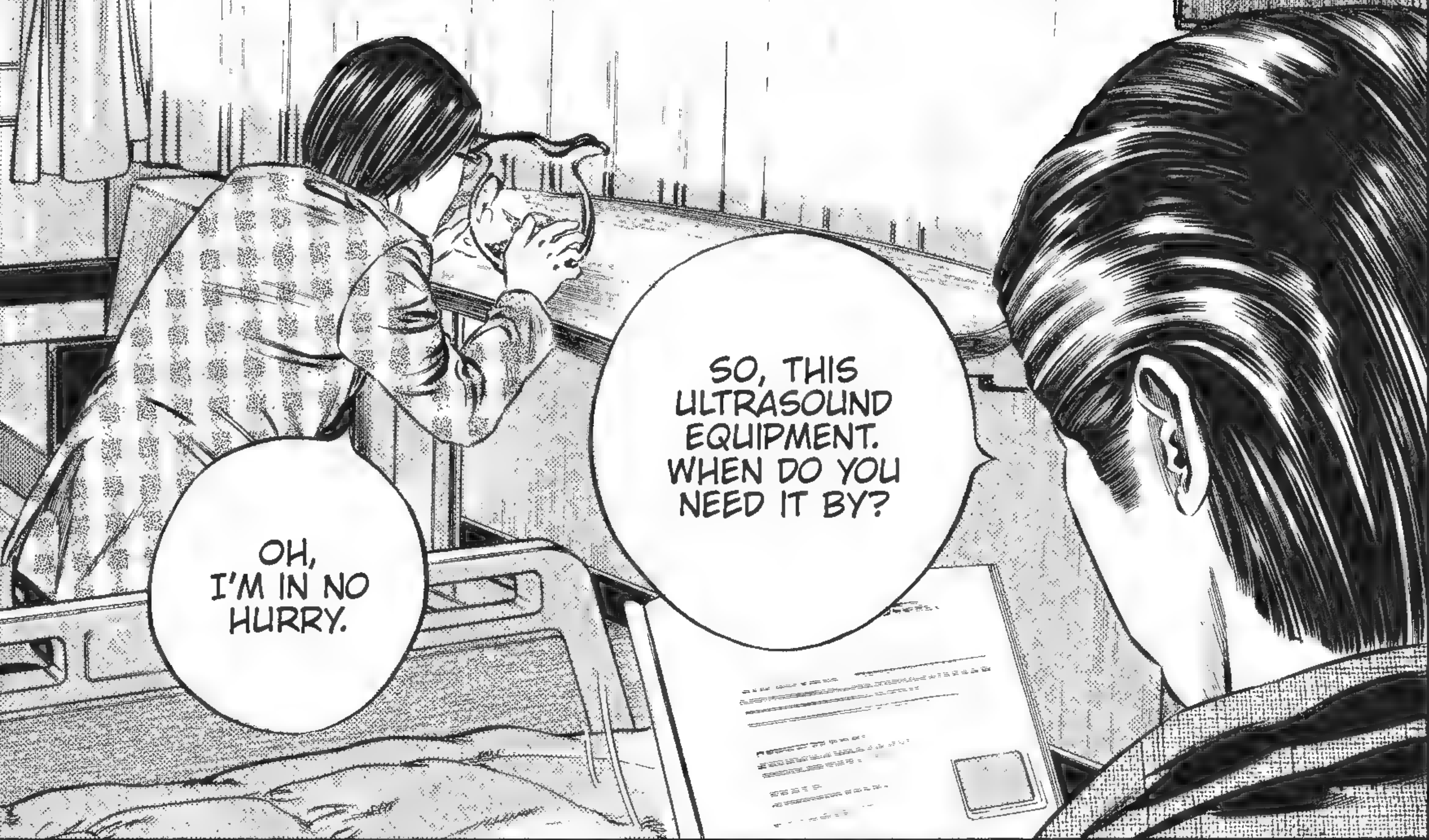
WHAT  
DO YOU  
THINK?

THERE!  
SEE,  
DAD?







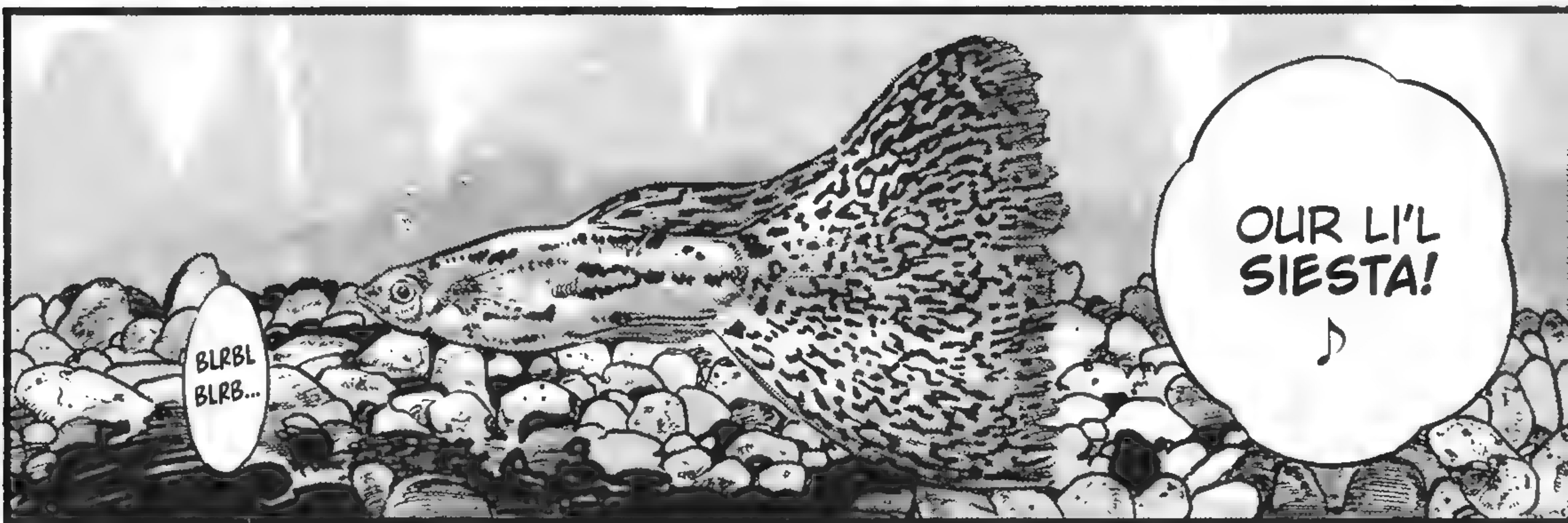






ISN'T OUR  
NEW FISHY  
ADORABLE?

ANYWAY,  
WHAT  
DO YOU  
THINK?



BLRBL  
BLRB...

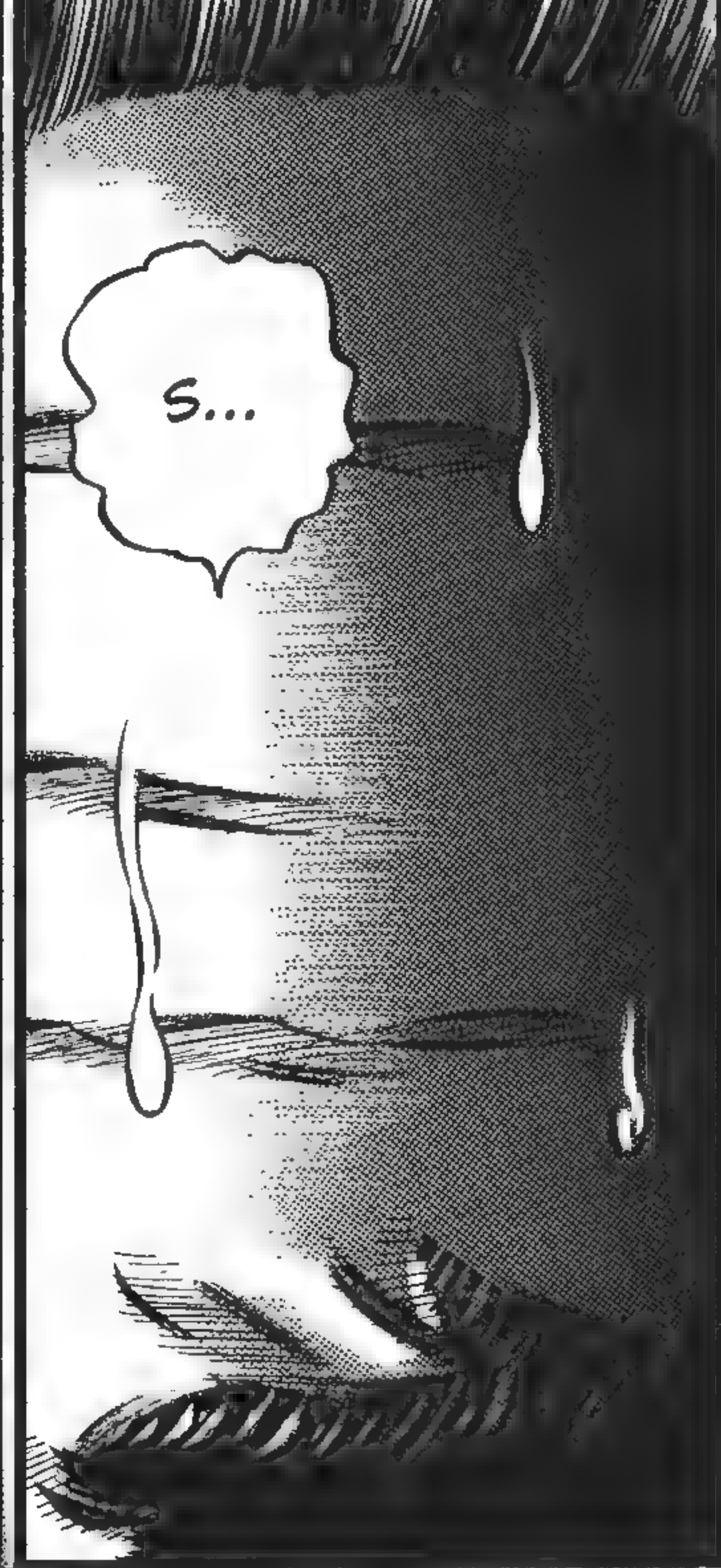
OUR LI'L  
SIESTA!







SIESTA?



S...



THE  
NEWEST  
MEMBER  
OF THE  
FAMILY!  
♪

YUP!

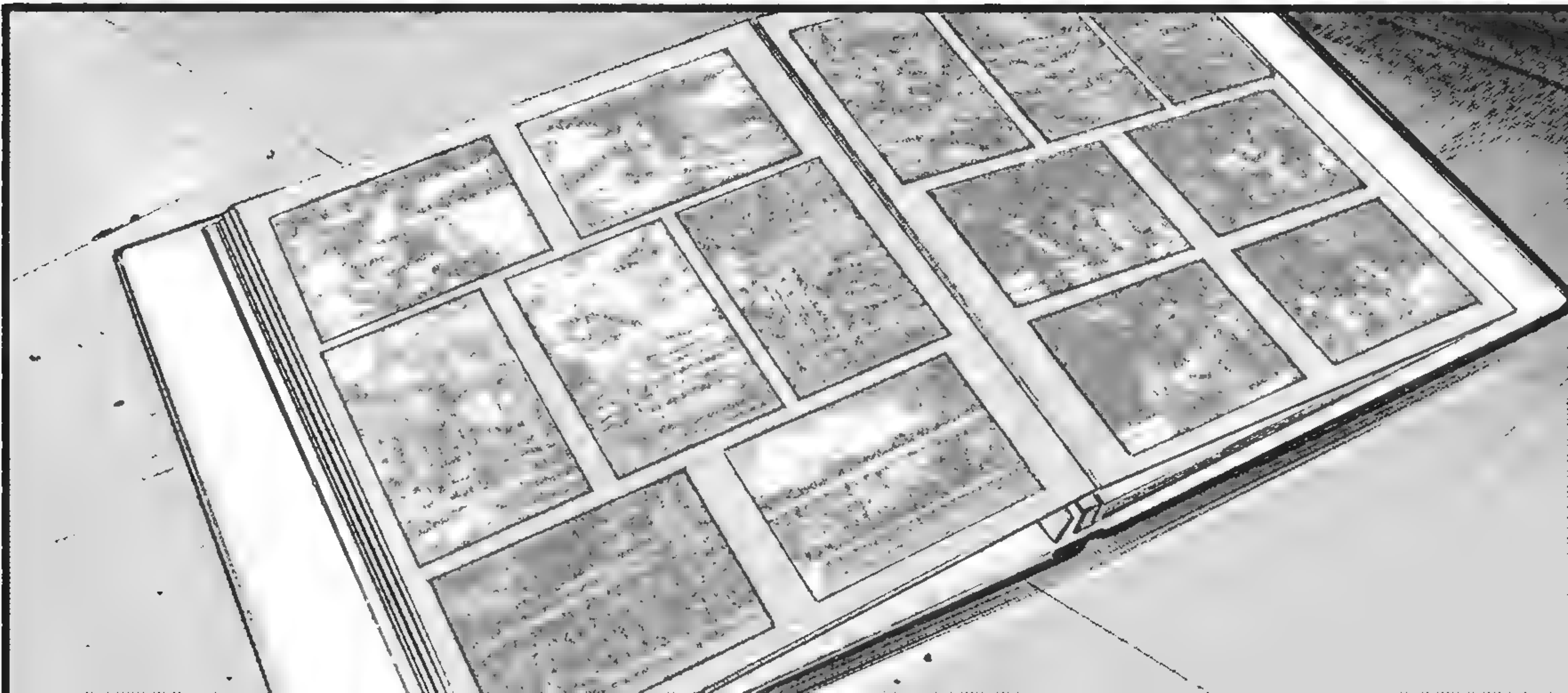
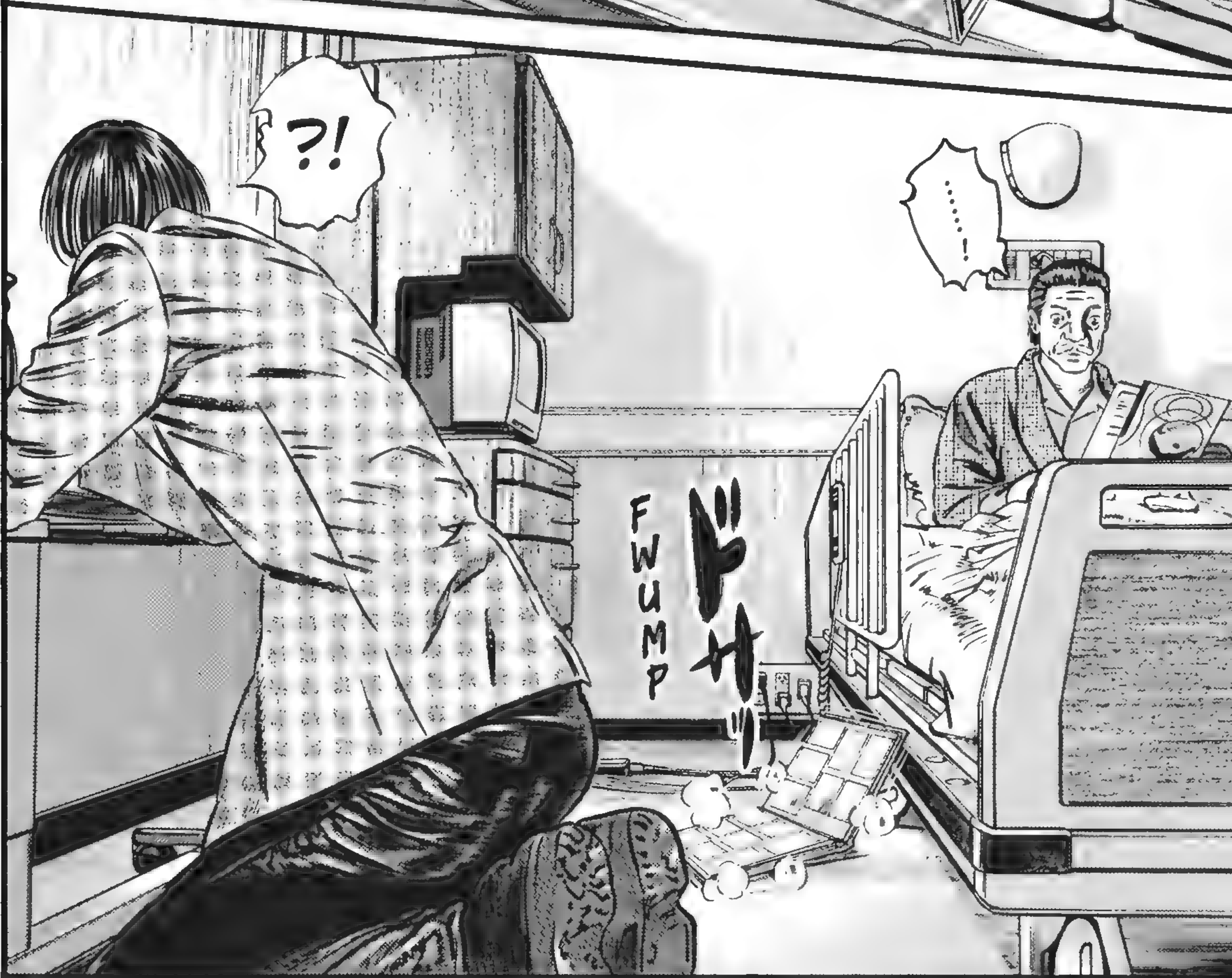


GREAT  
NAME,  
ISN'T  
IT?



.....







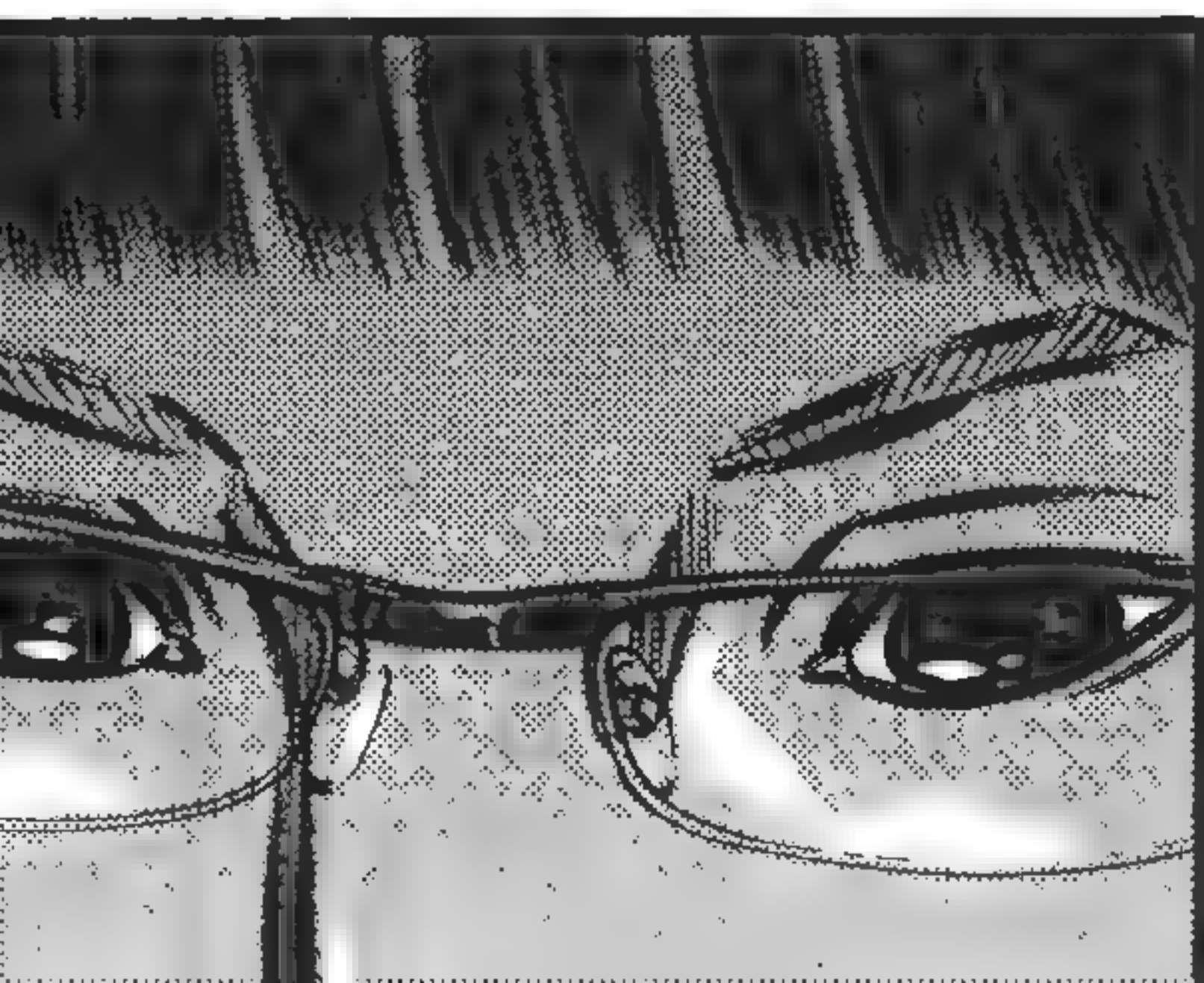




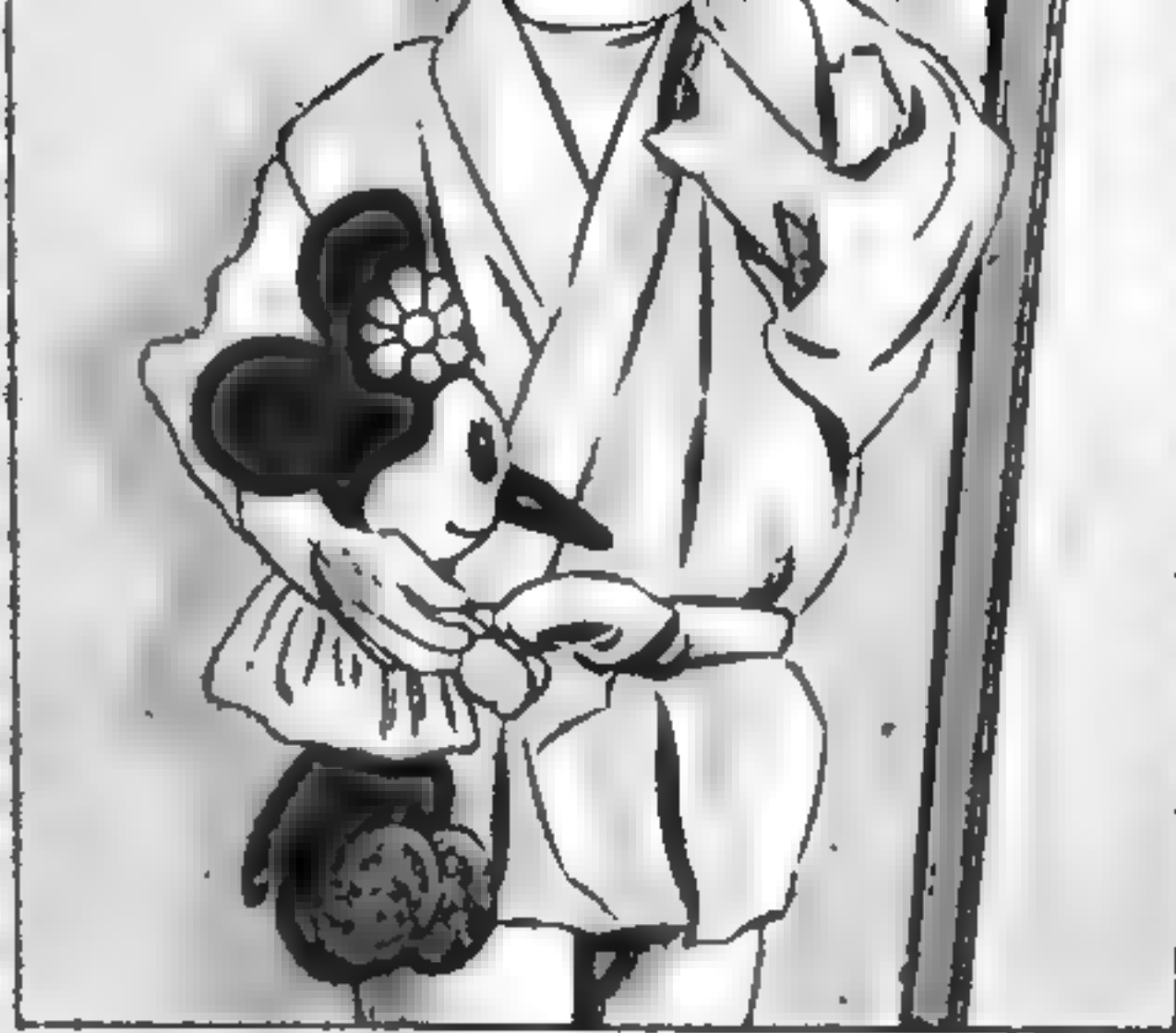


HEY!  
THESE  
ARE ALL  
OF ME!

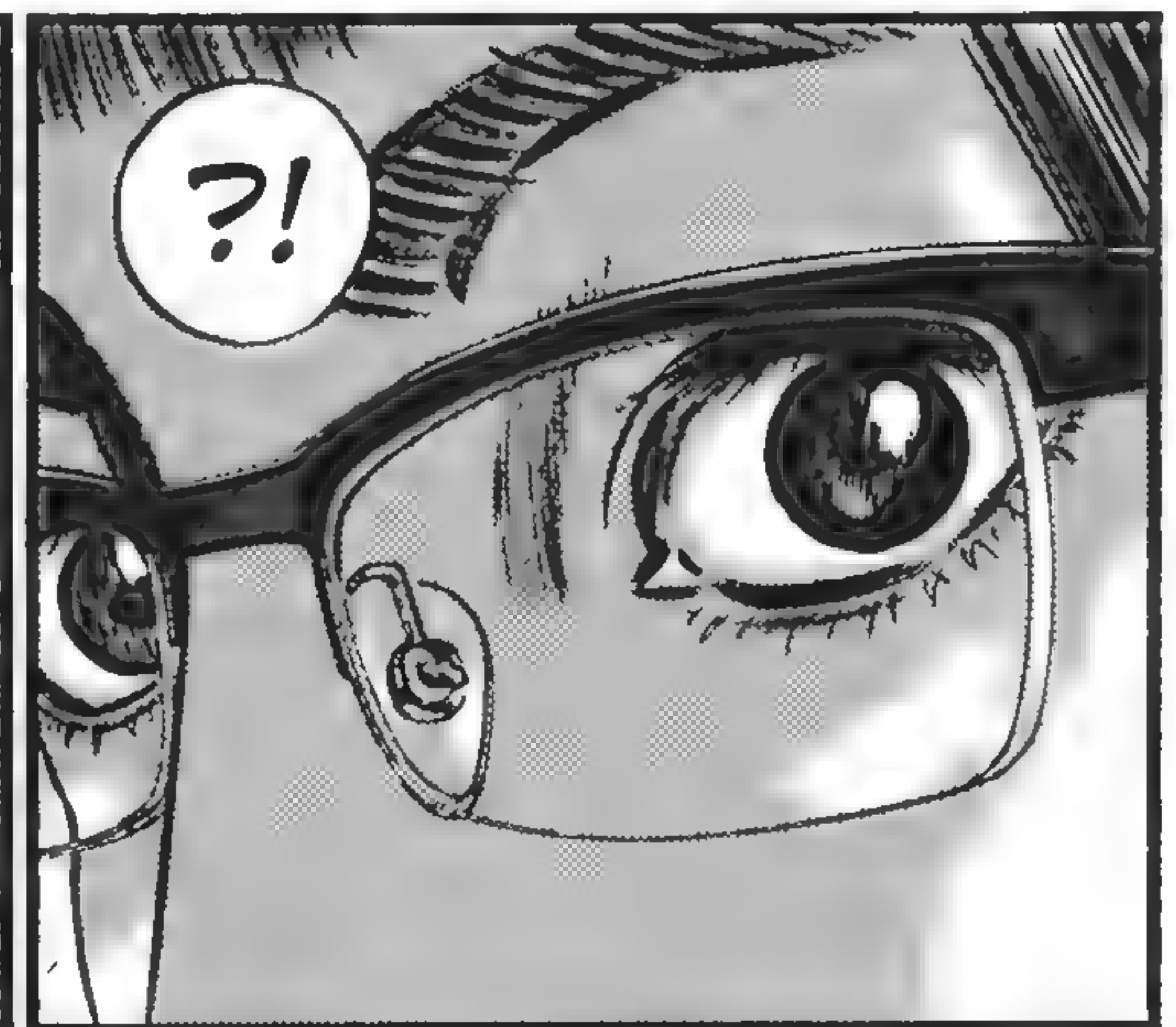




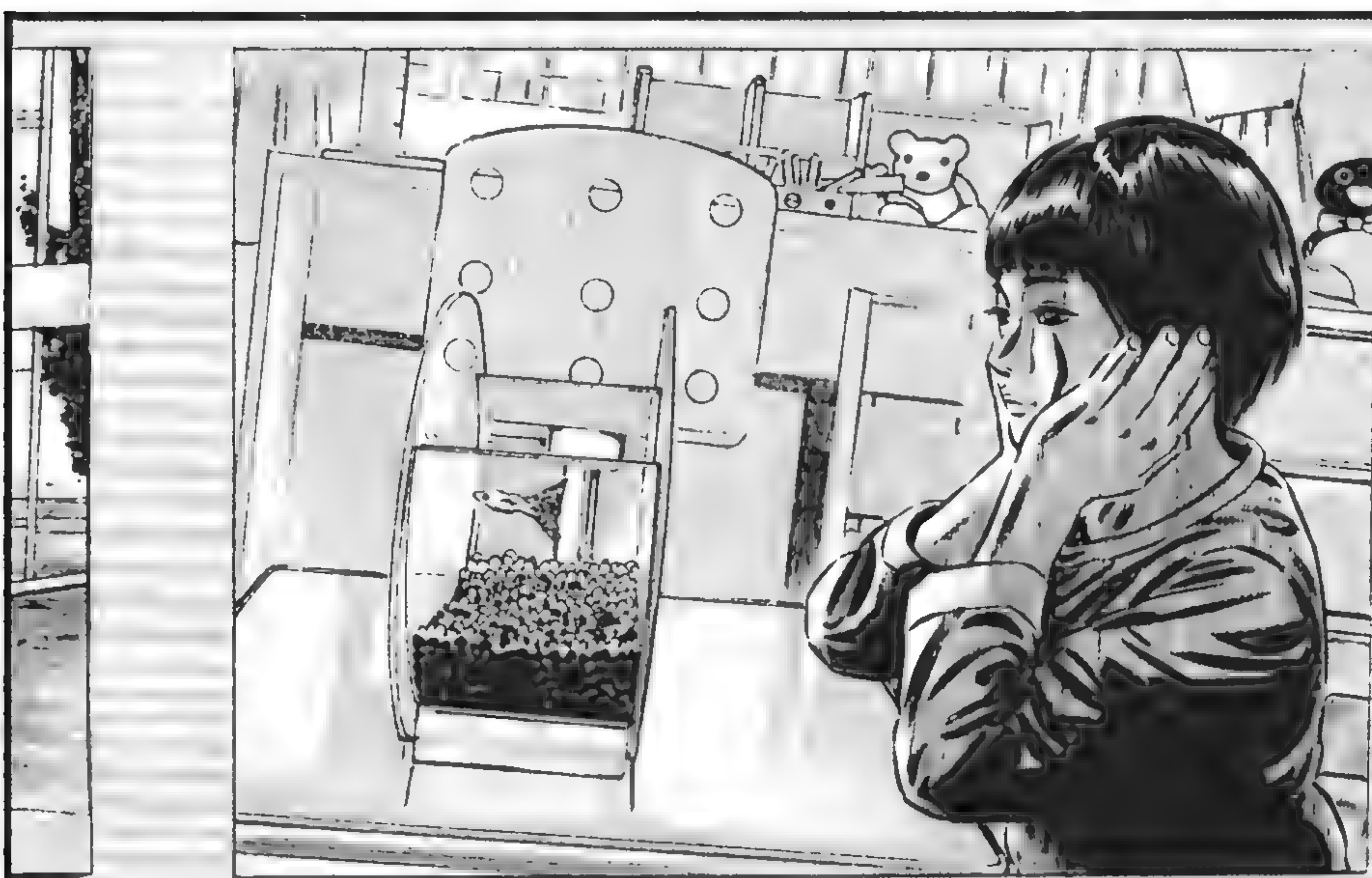
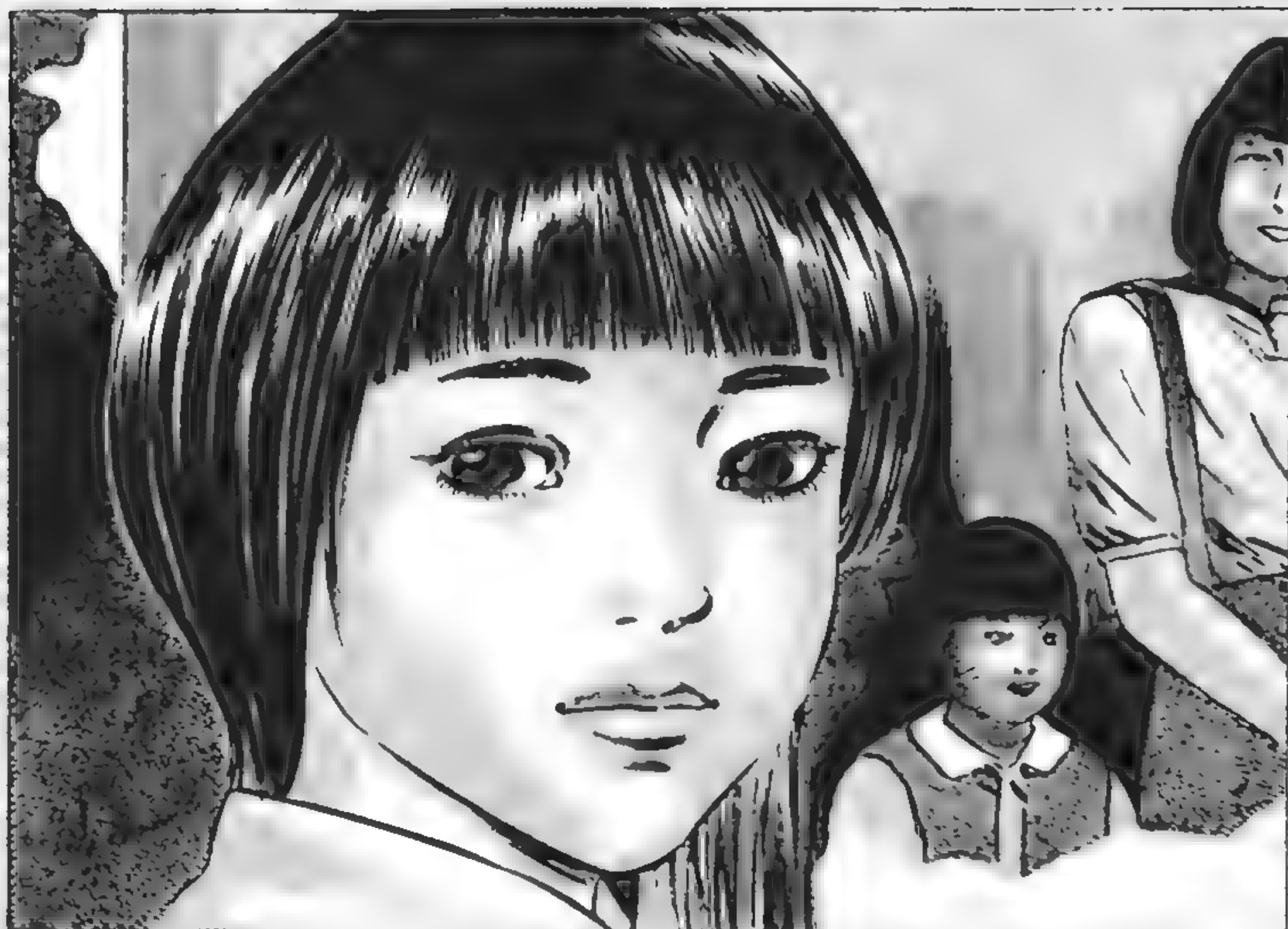














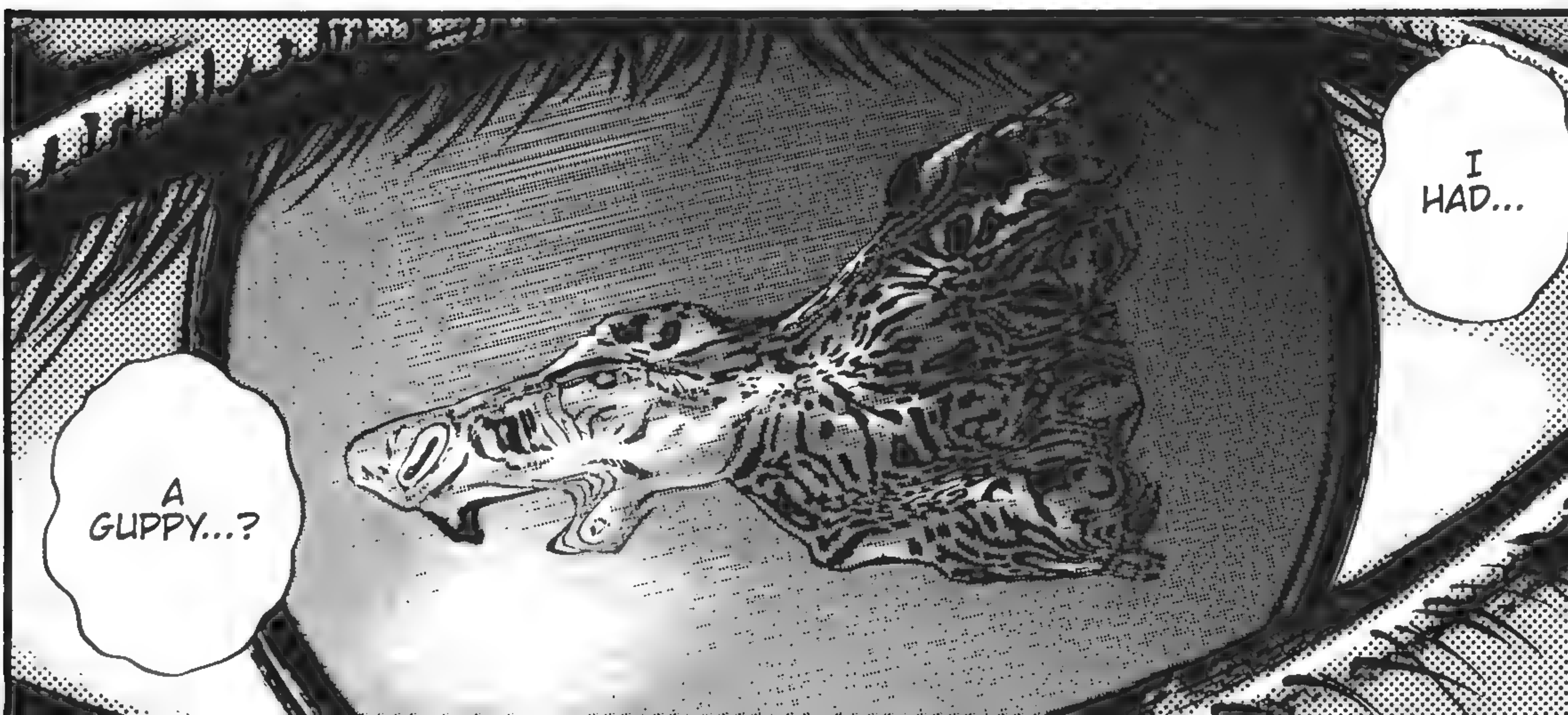
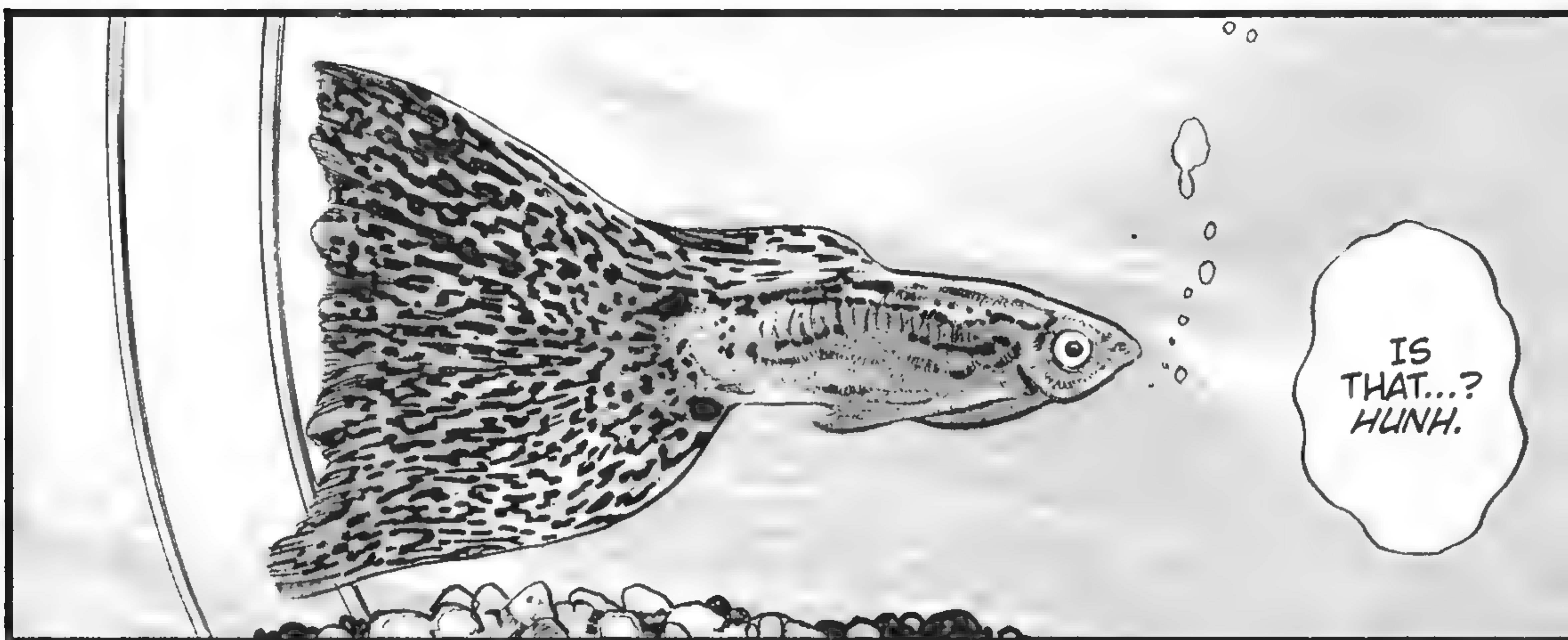


I'M  
SORRY...

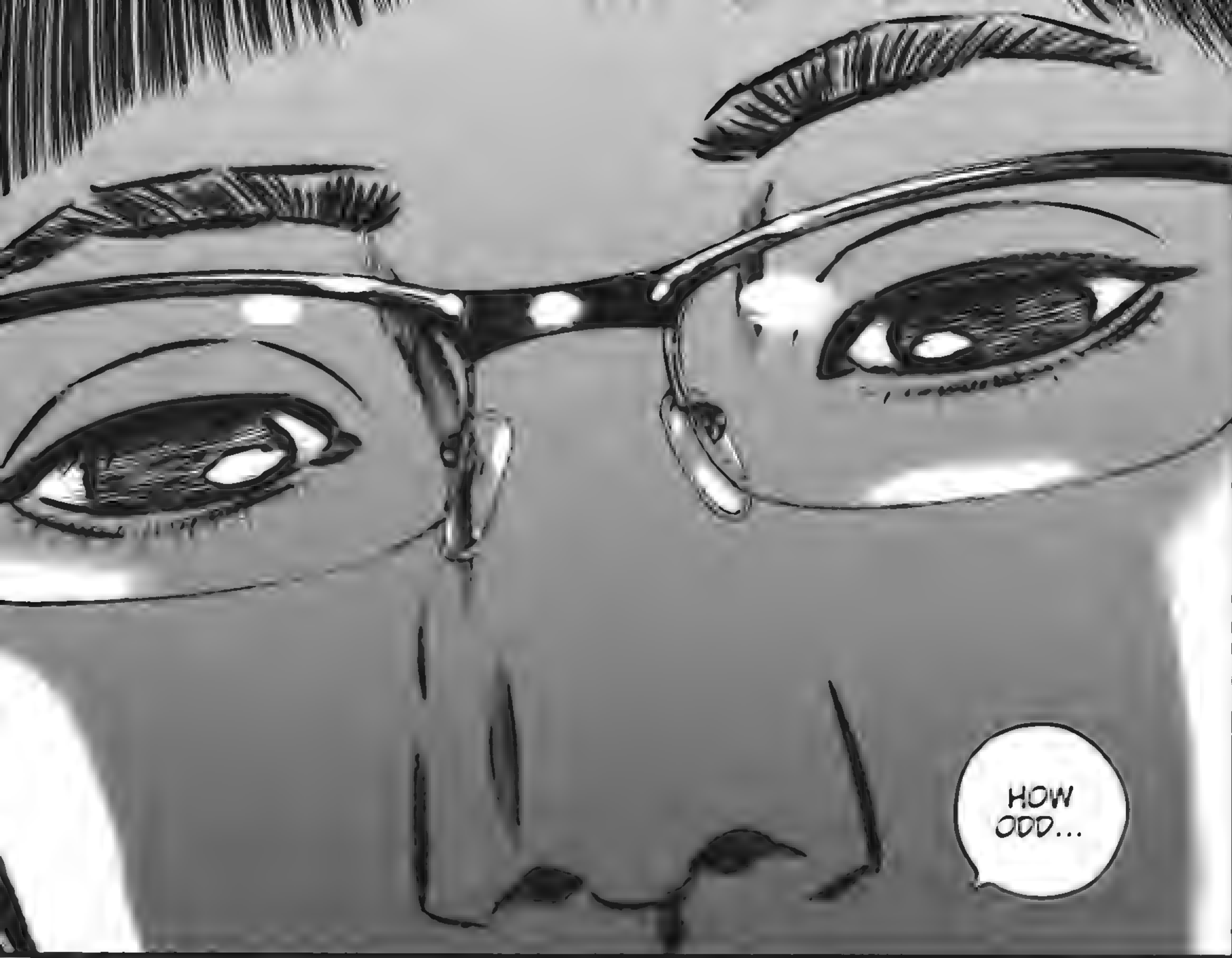


HA HA!  
WHAT ARE YOU  
APOLOGIZING  
FOR, DAD?









HOW  
ODD...



I...





A black and white manga-style illustration. In the foreground, a large, shallow bowl is filled with many small, oval-shaped objects, possibly eggs or pills. Behind the bowl, a man with a mustache and dark hair is sitting up in a hospital bed, wearing a light-colored robe. He is looking towards a woman standing next to the bed. The woman has long dark hair and is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved garment. She is holding a large snake with a dark, patterned body and a lighter head. The snake is coiled around her arm. A speech bubble from the man contains the text: "I ALWAYS WANTED TO APOLOGIZE... ABOUT SIESTA." The background shows a window with curtains and some medical equipment.

I ALWAYS  
WANTED TO  
APOLOGIZE...  
ABOUT  
SIESTA.

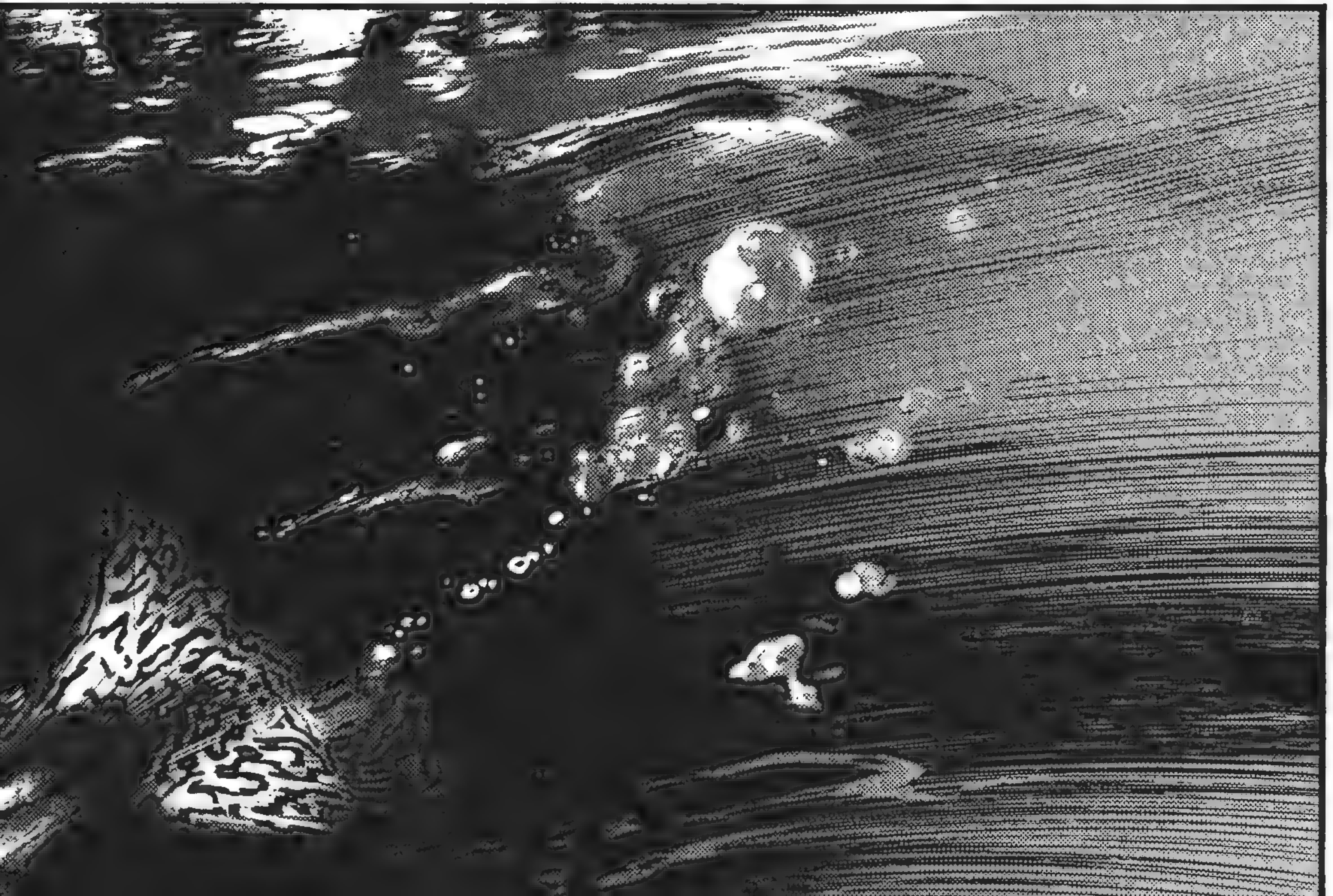




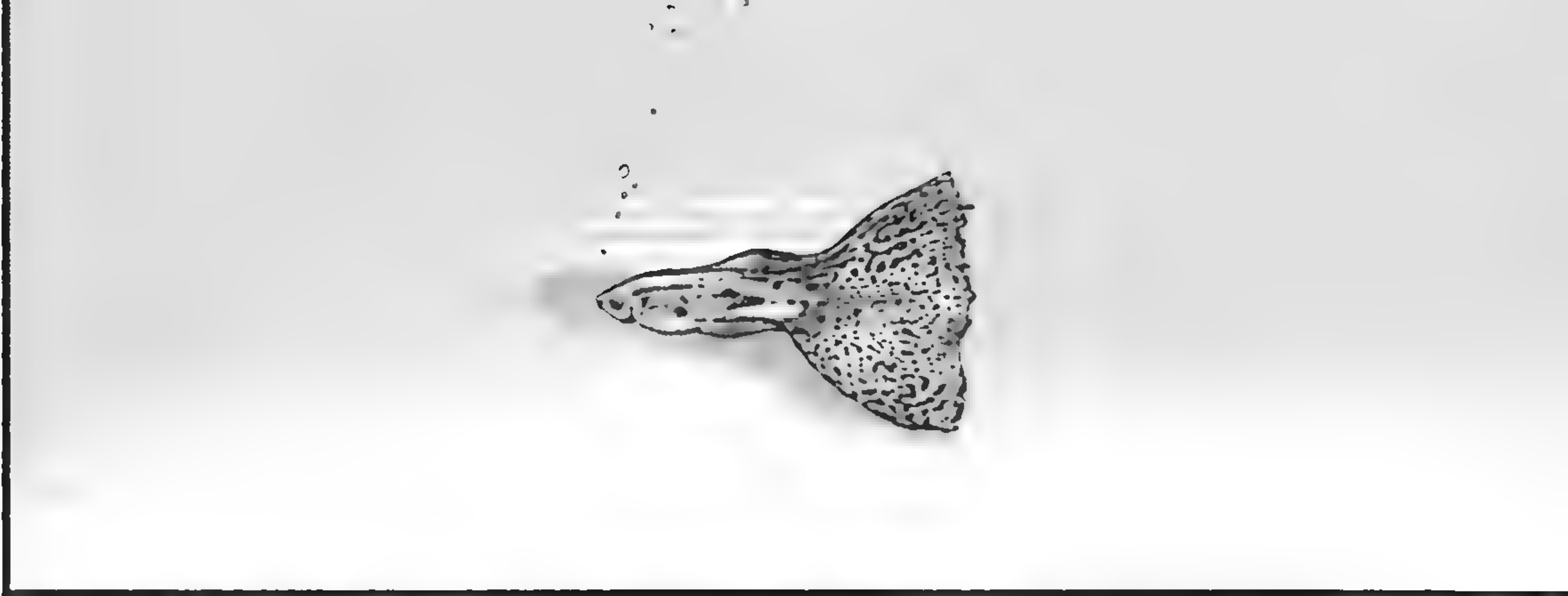
SIESTA  
...?



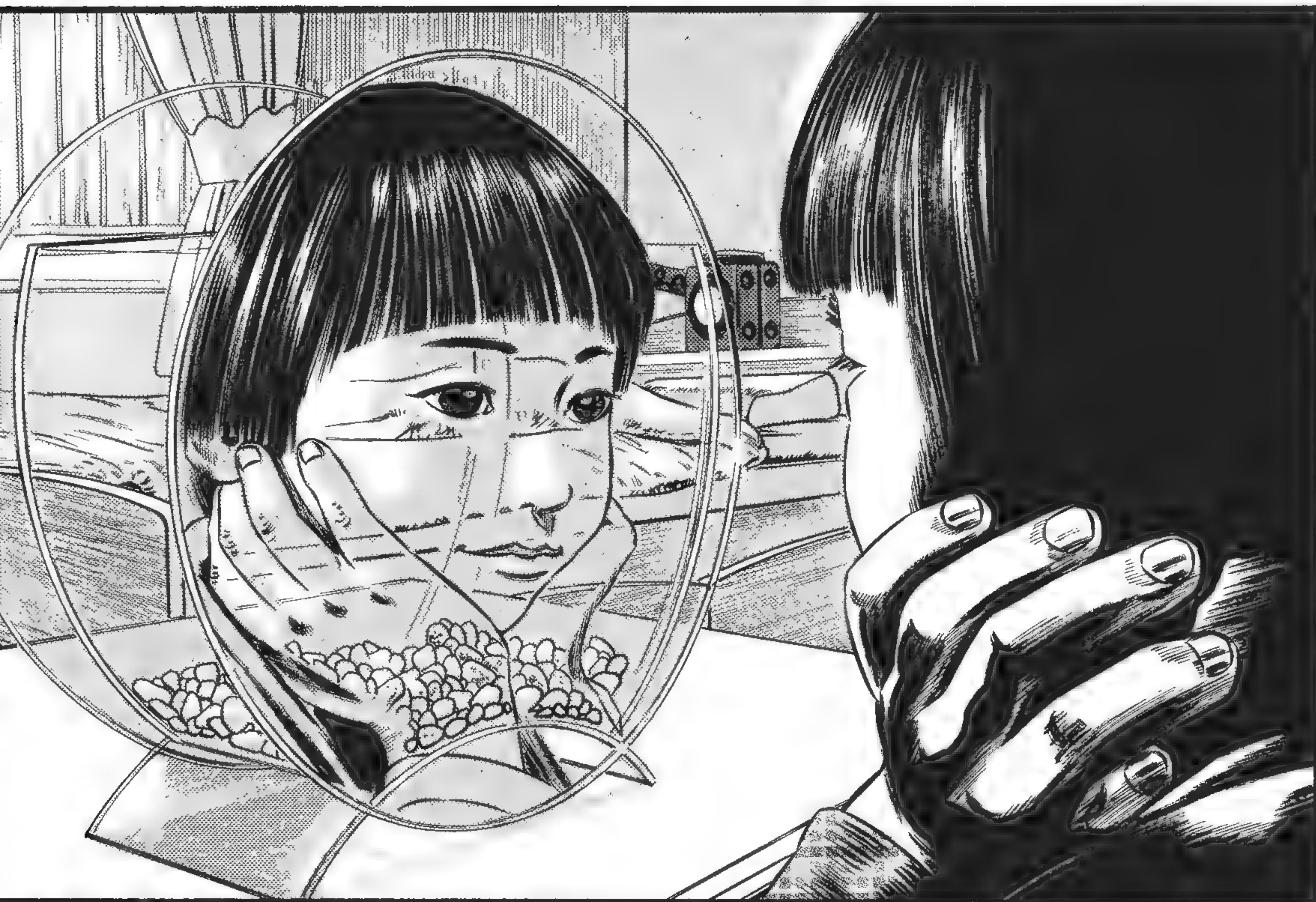
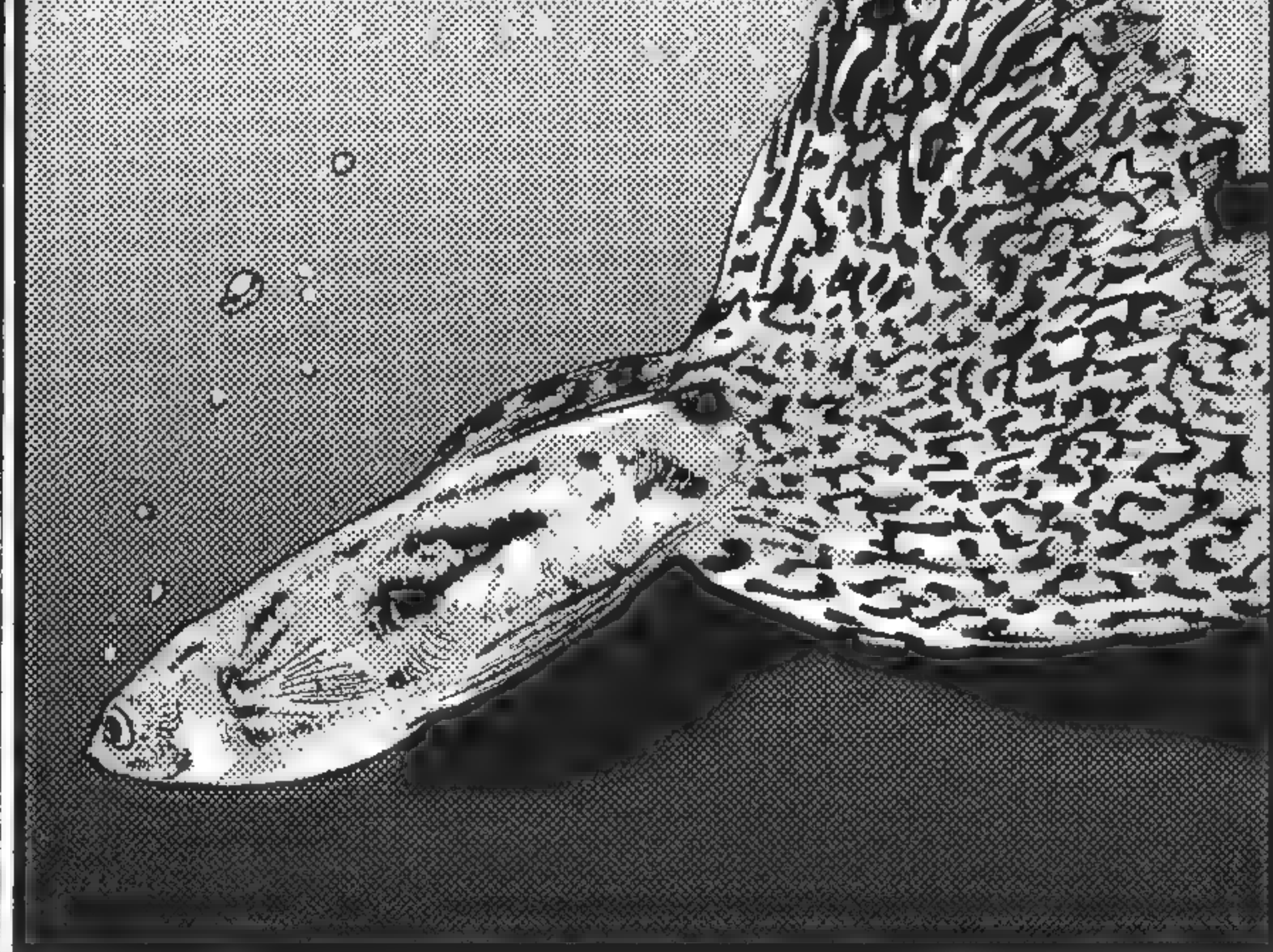
S...



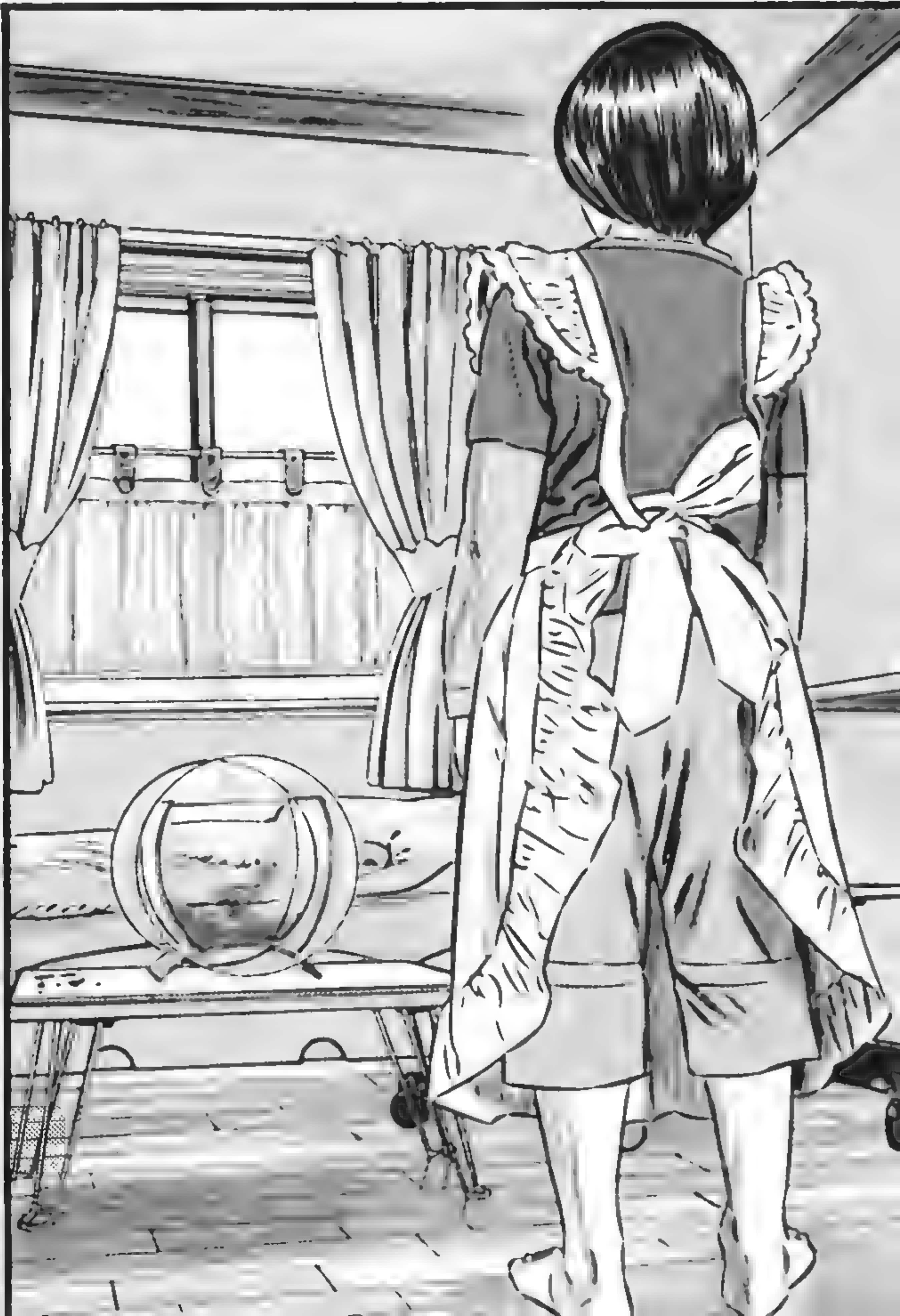
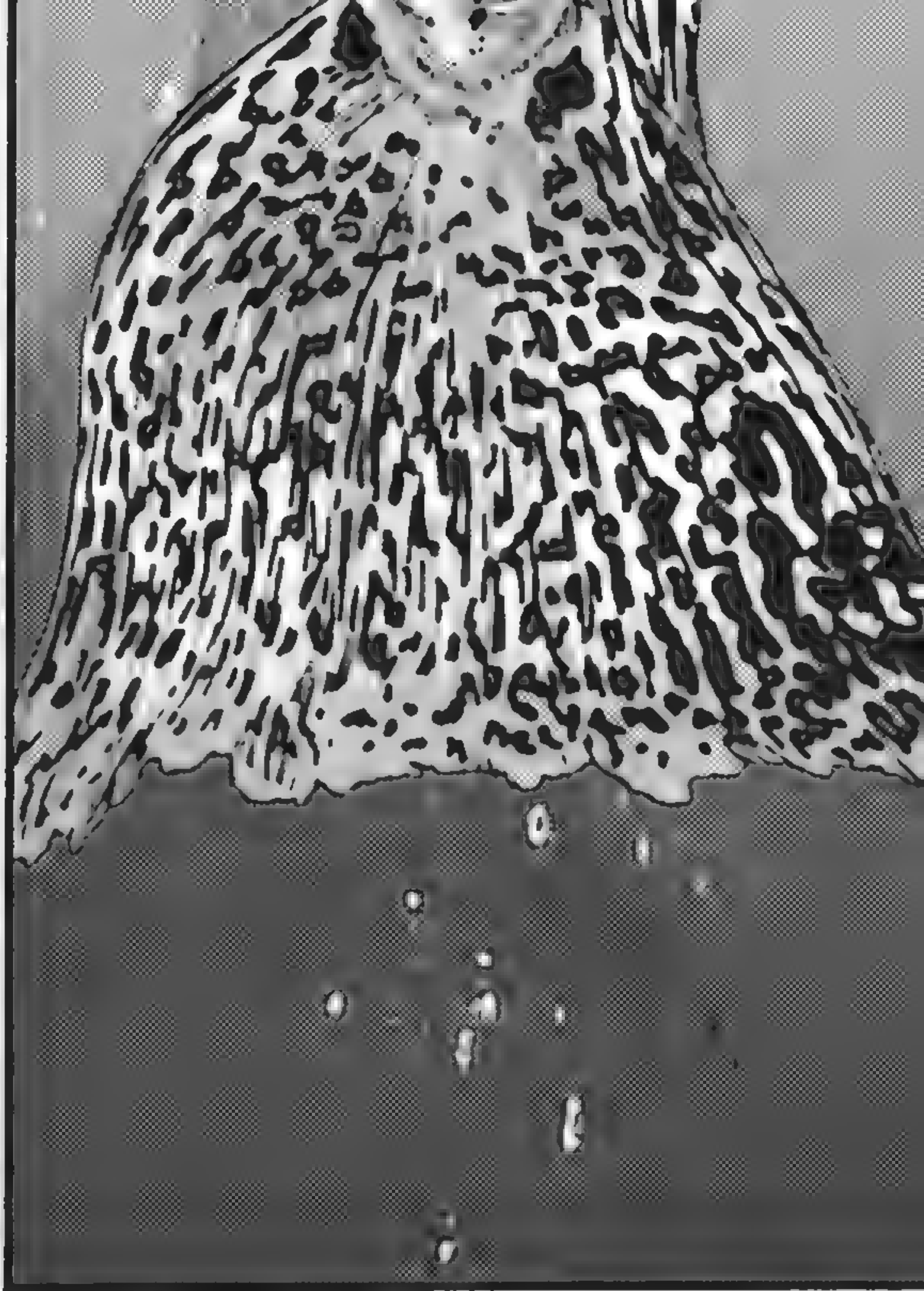




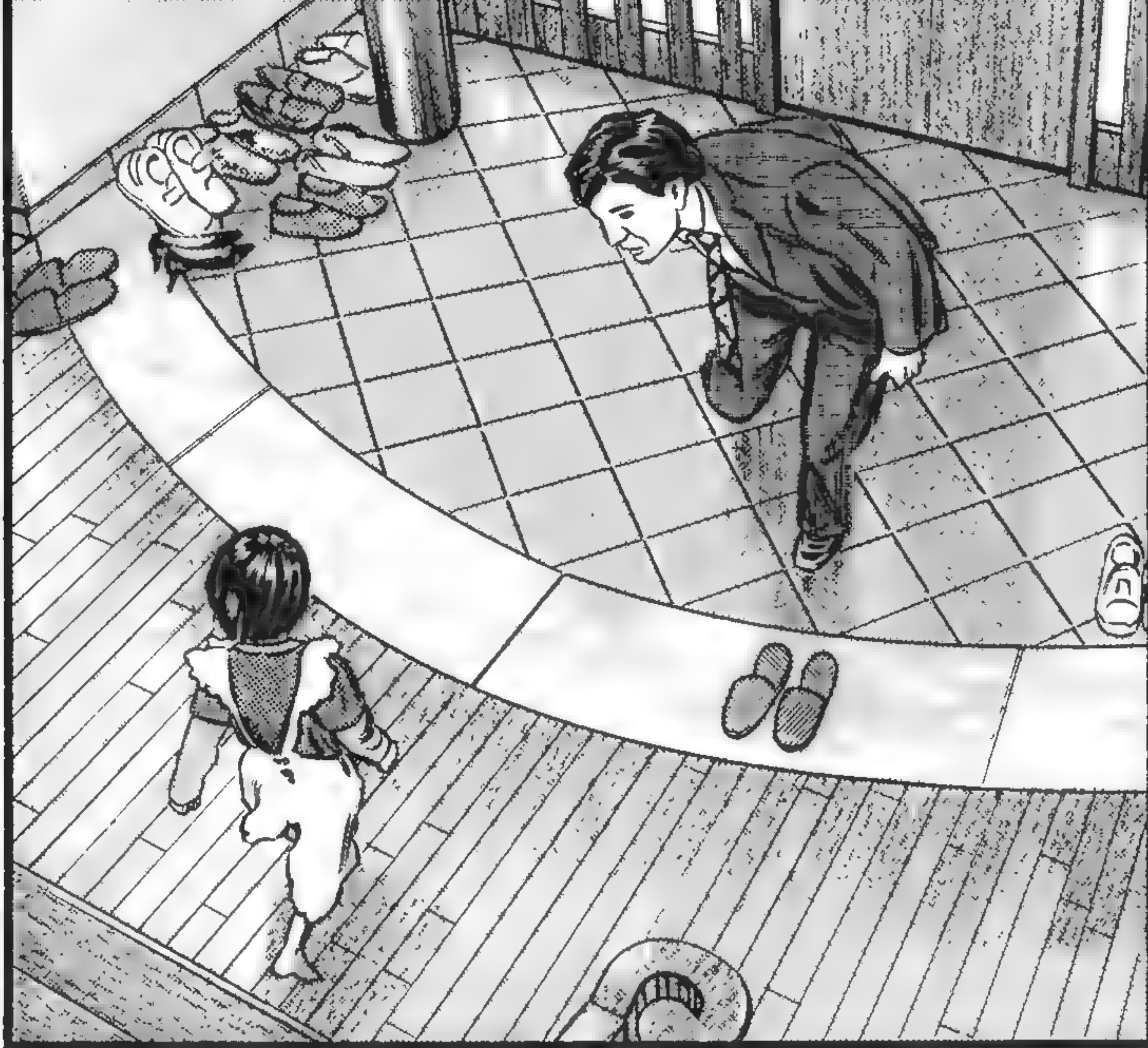




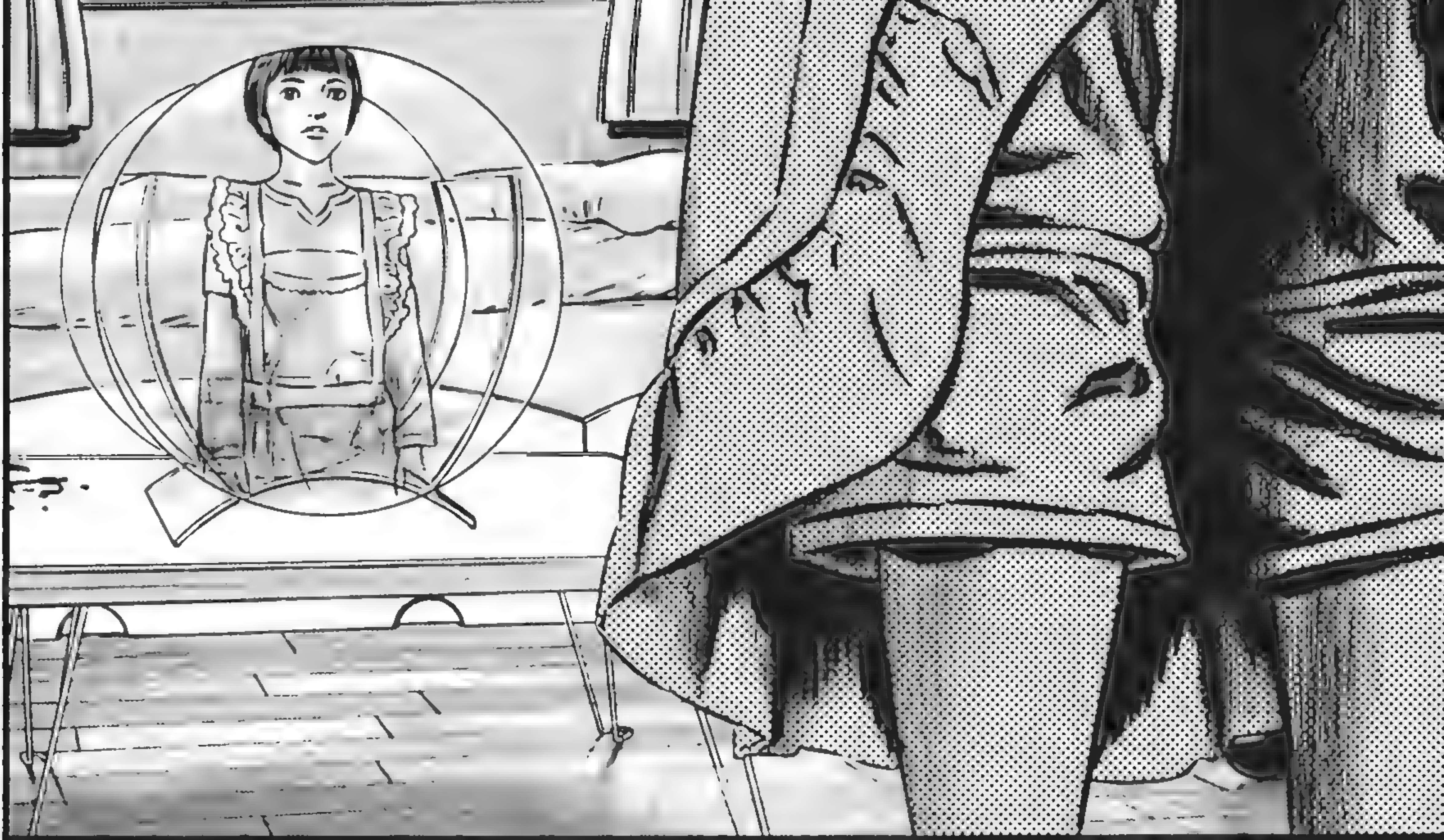












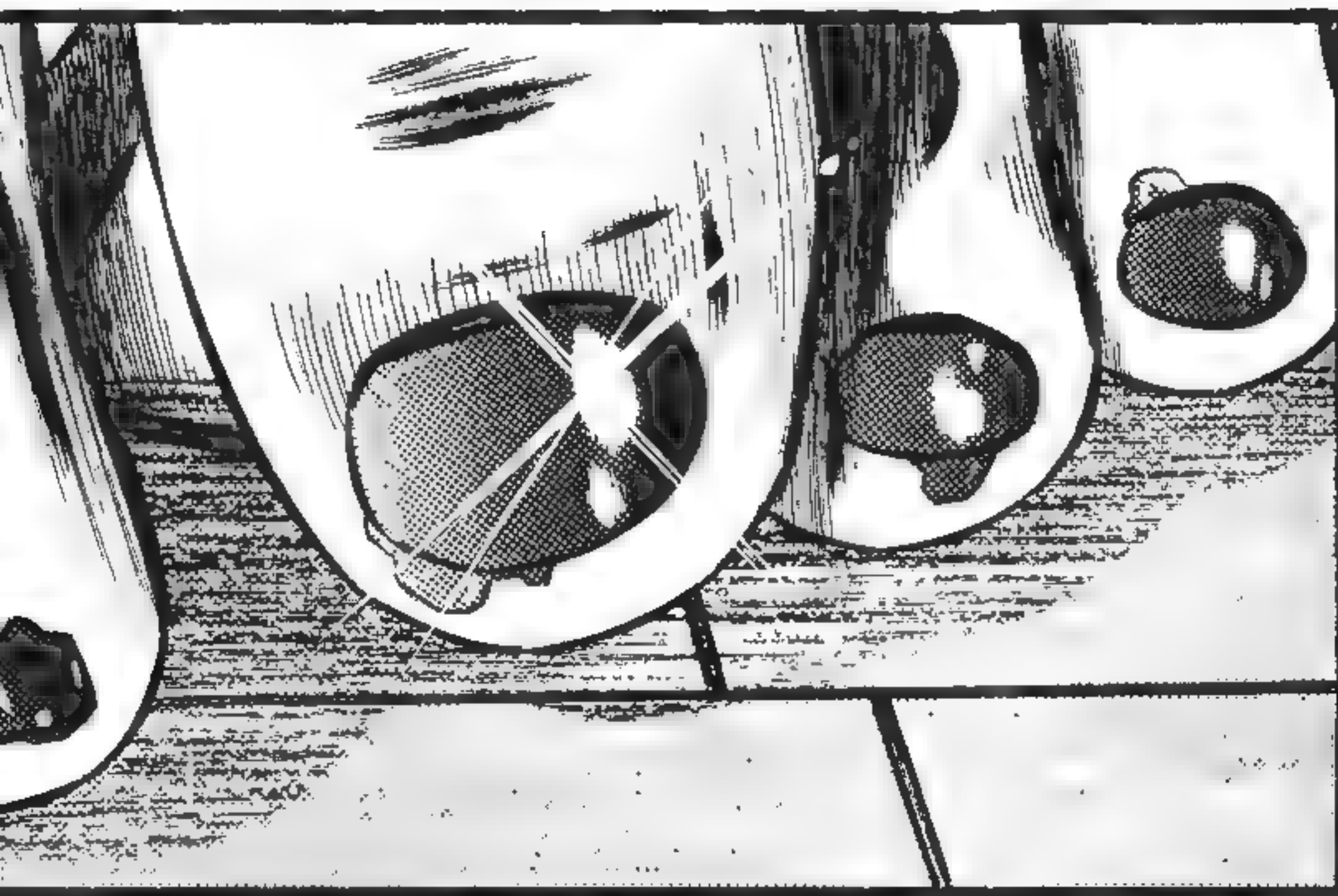




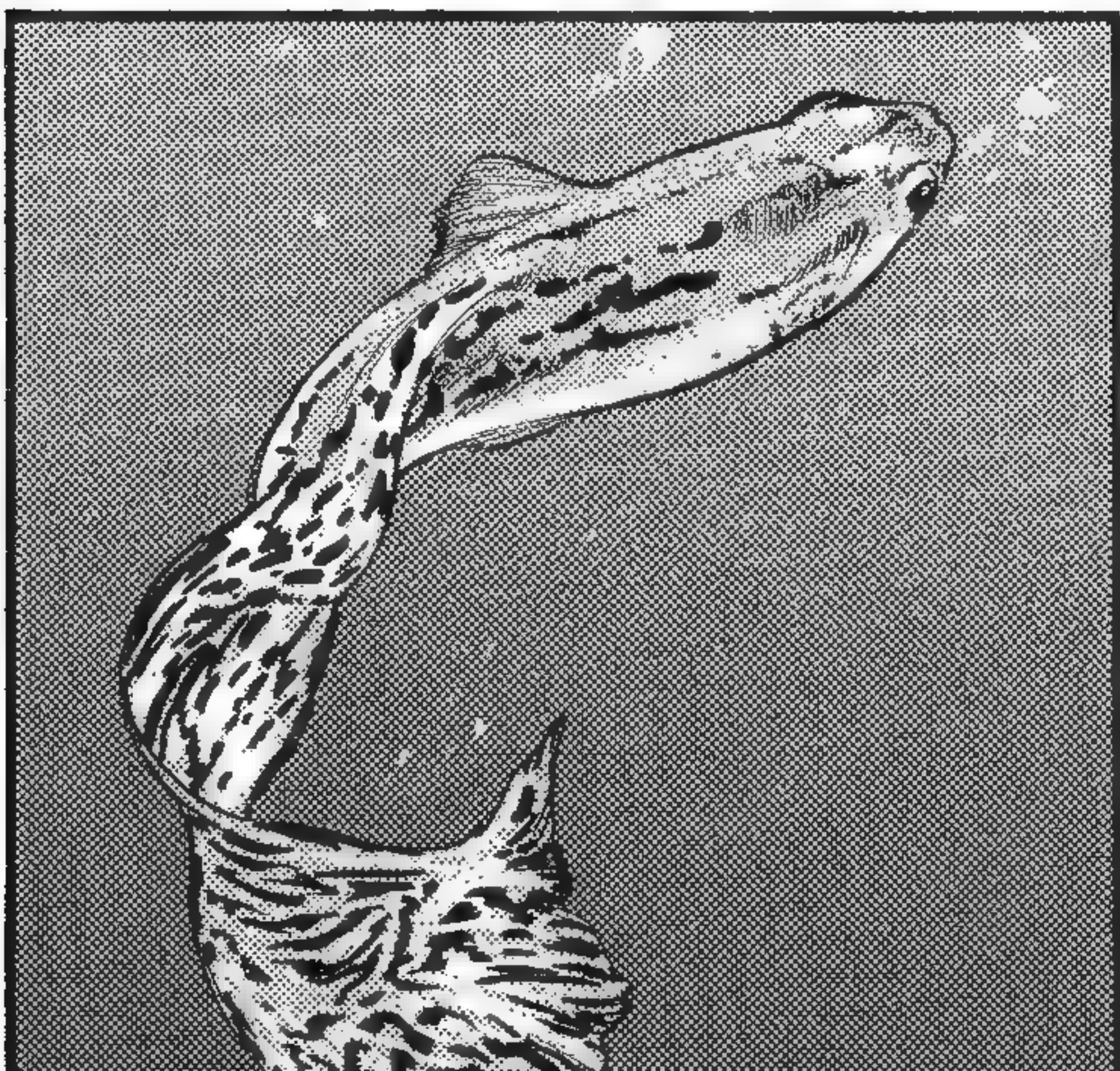
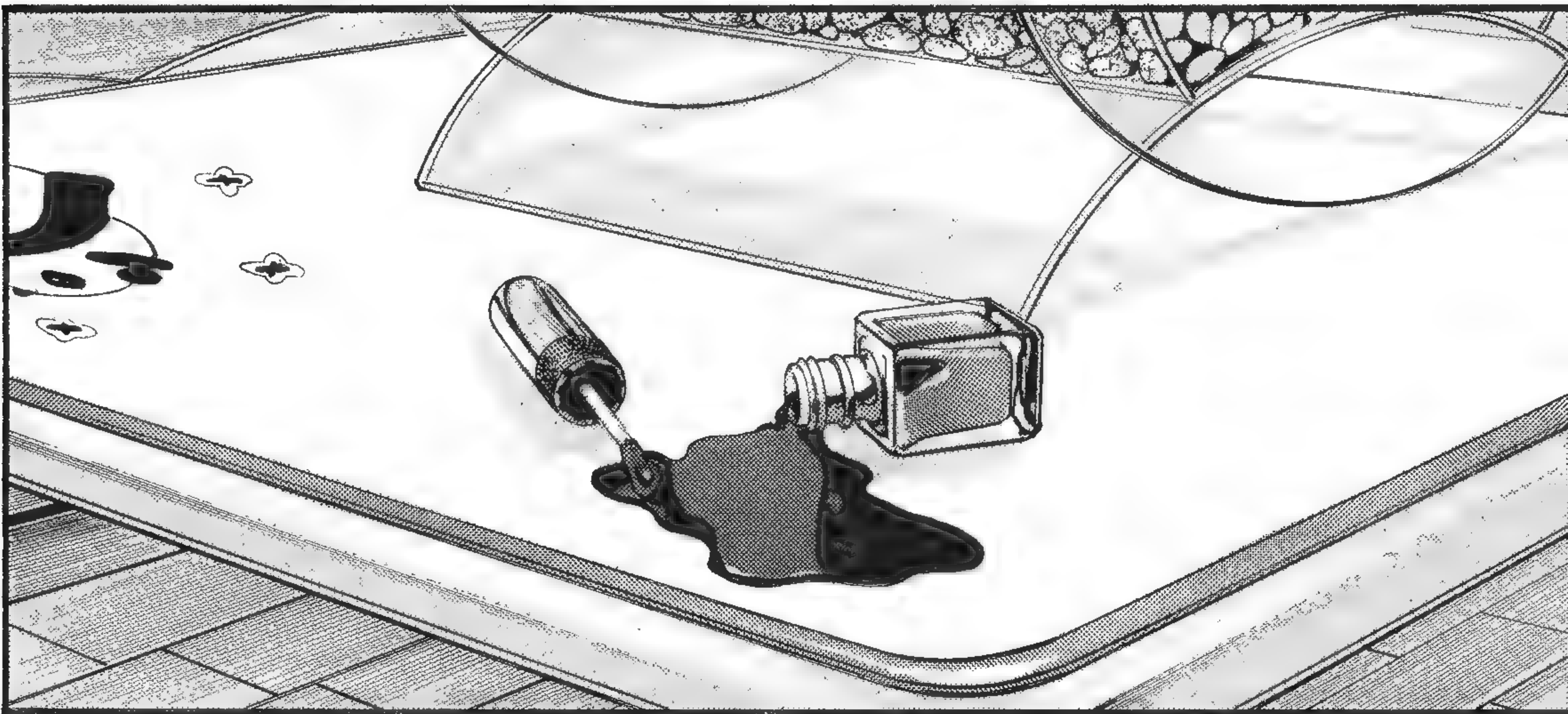
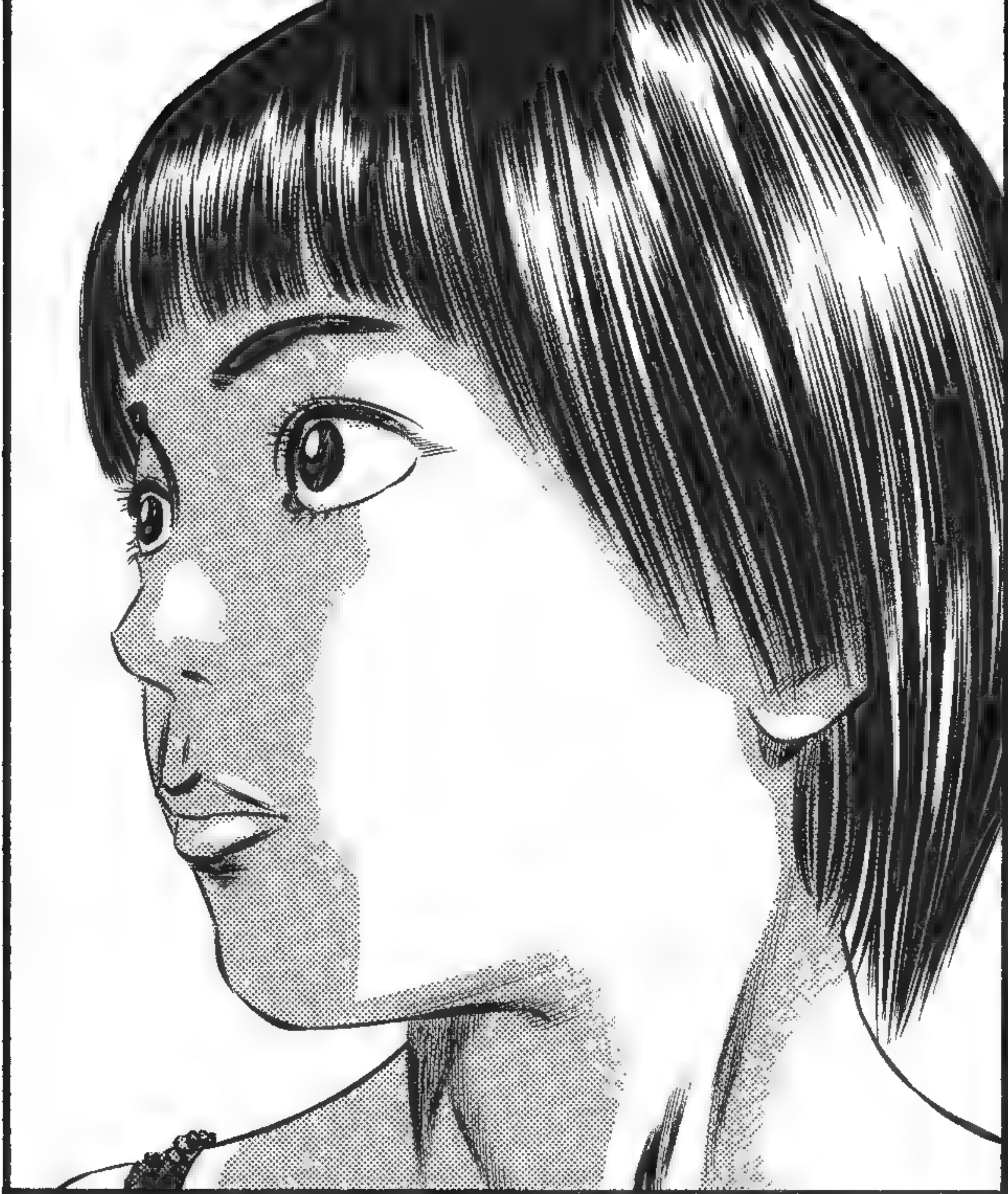




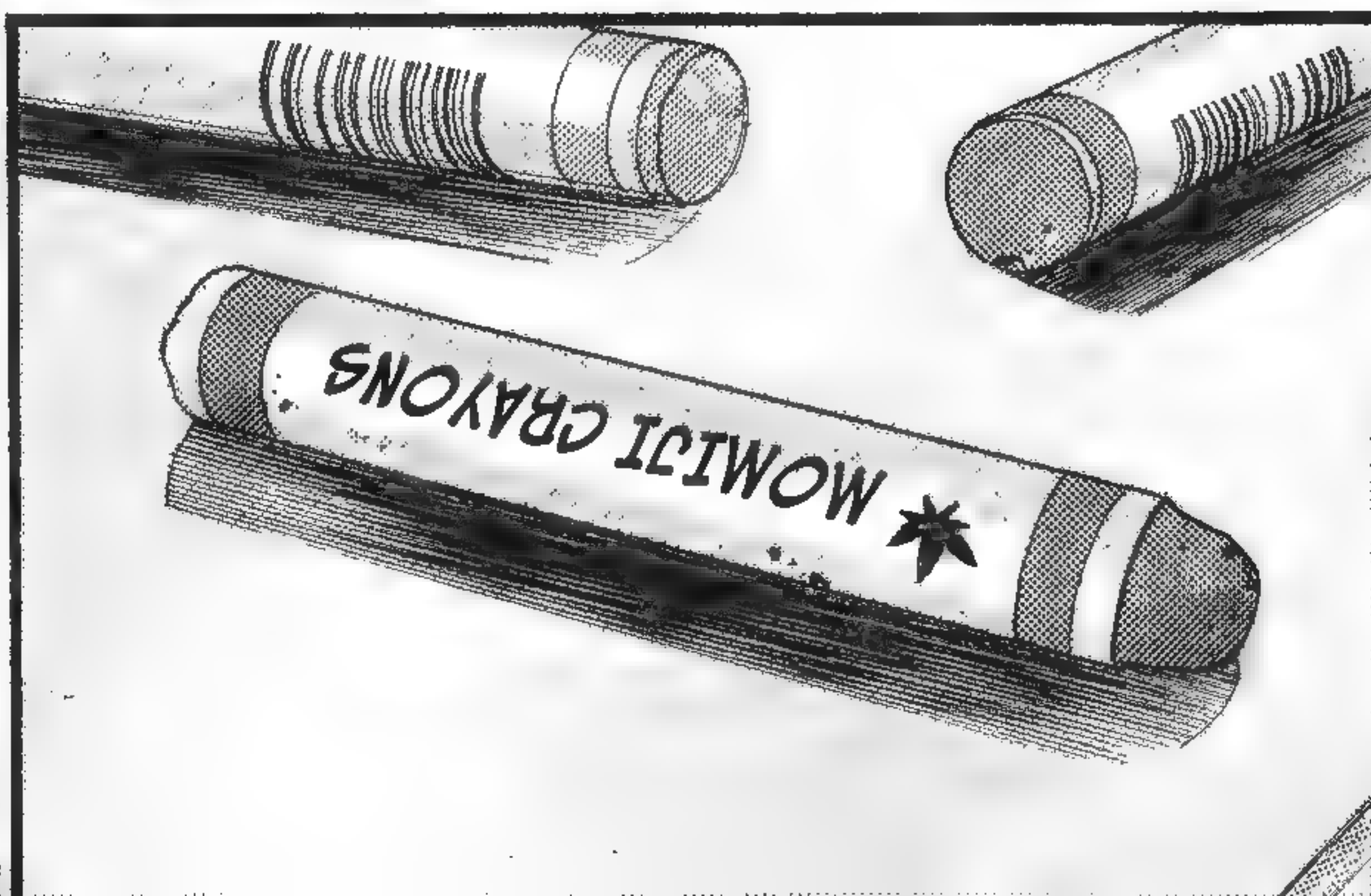
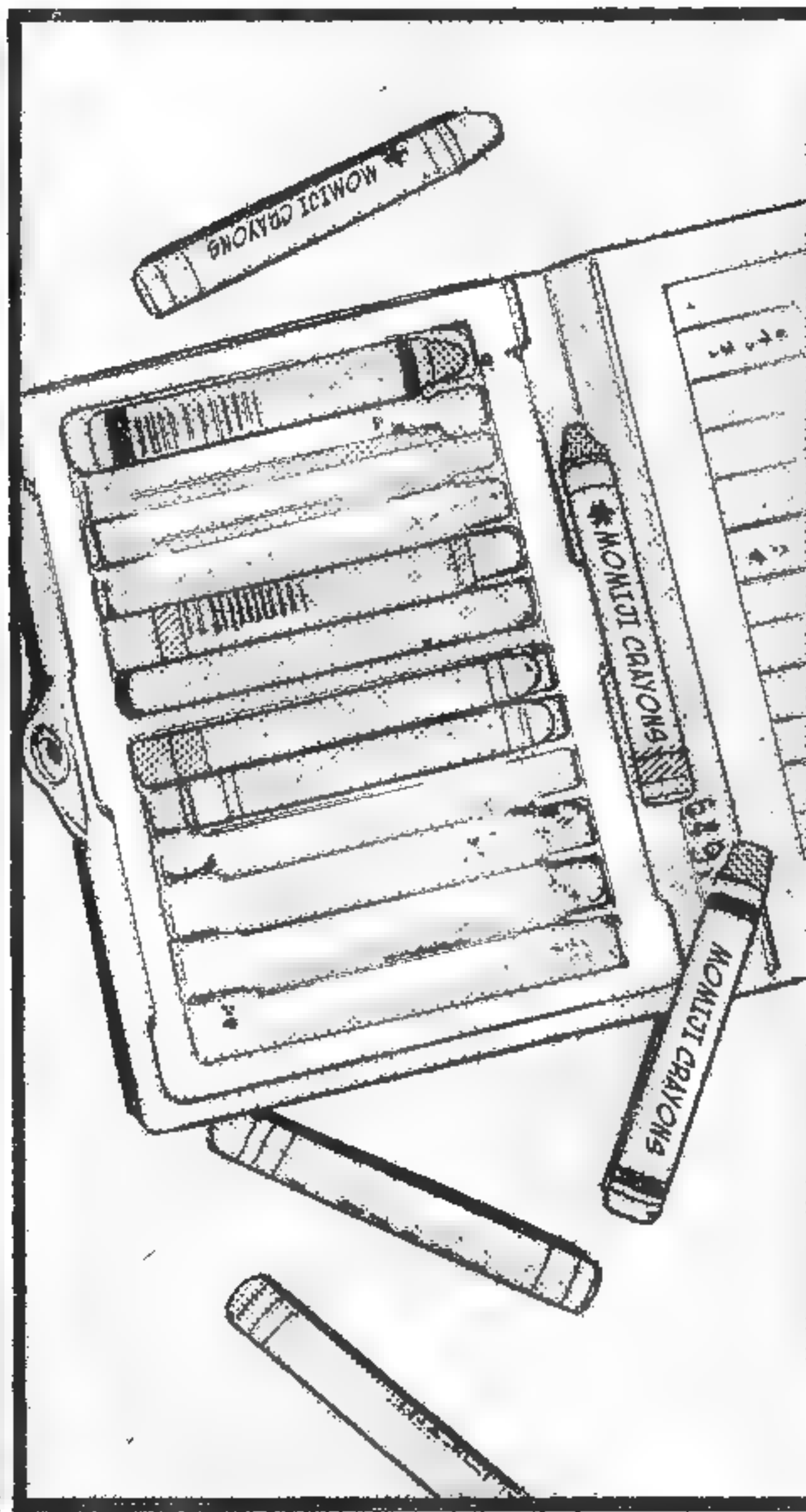
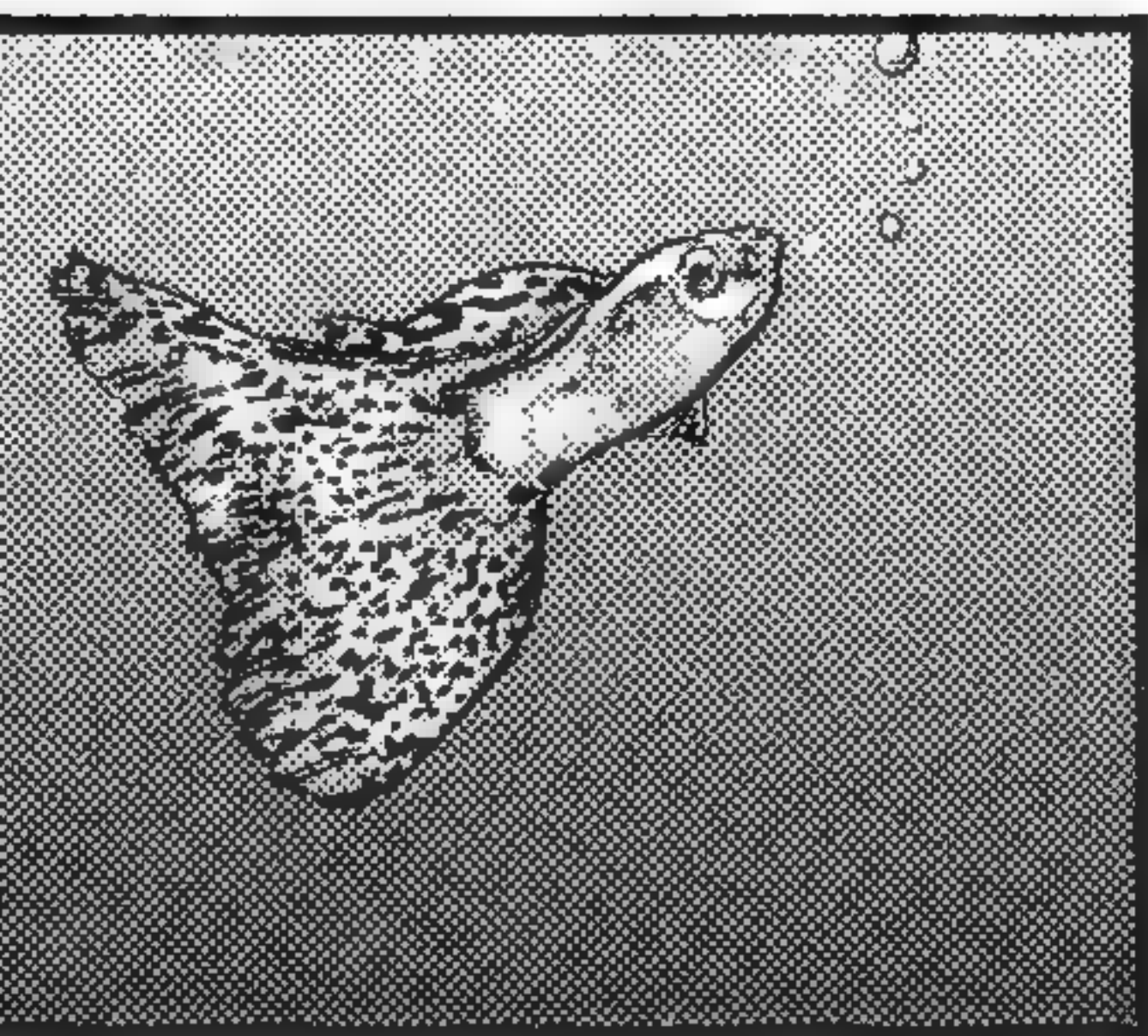












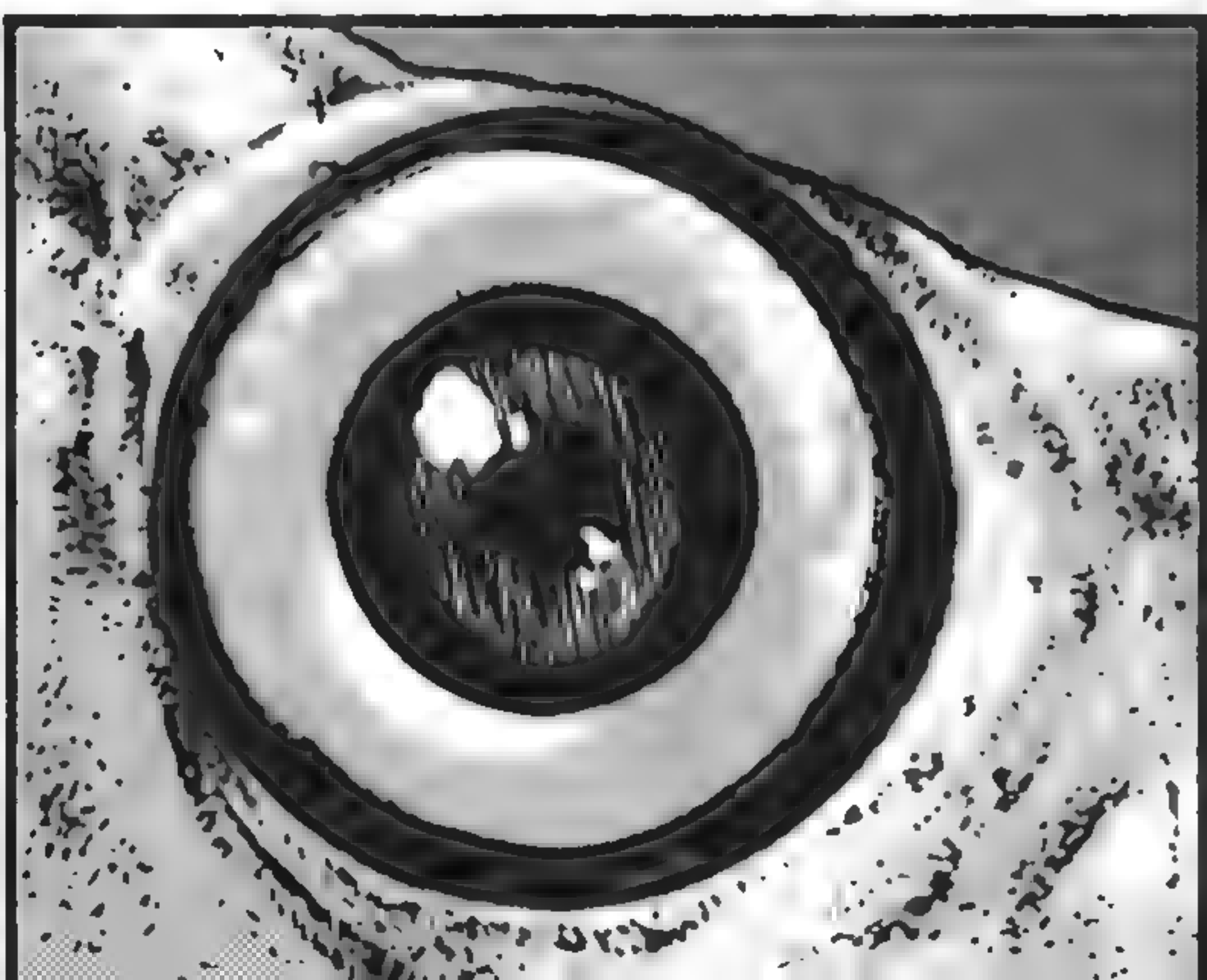
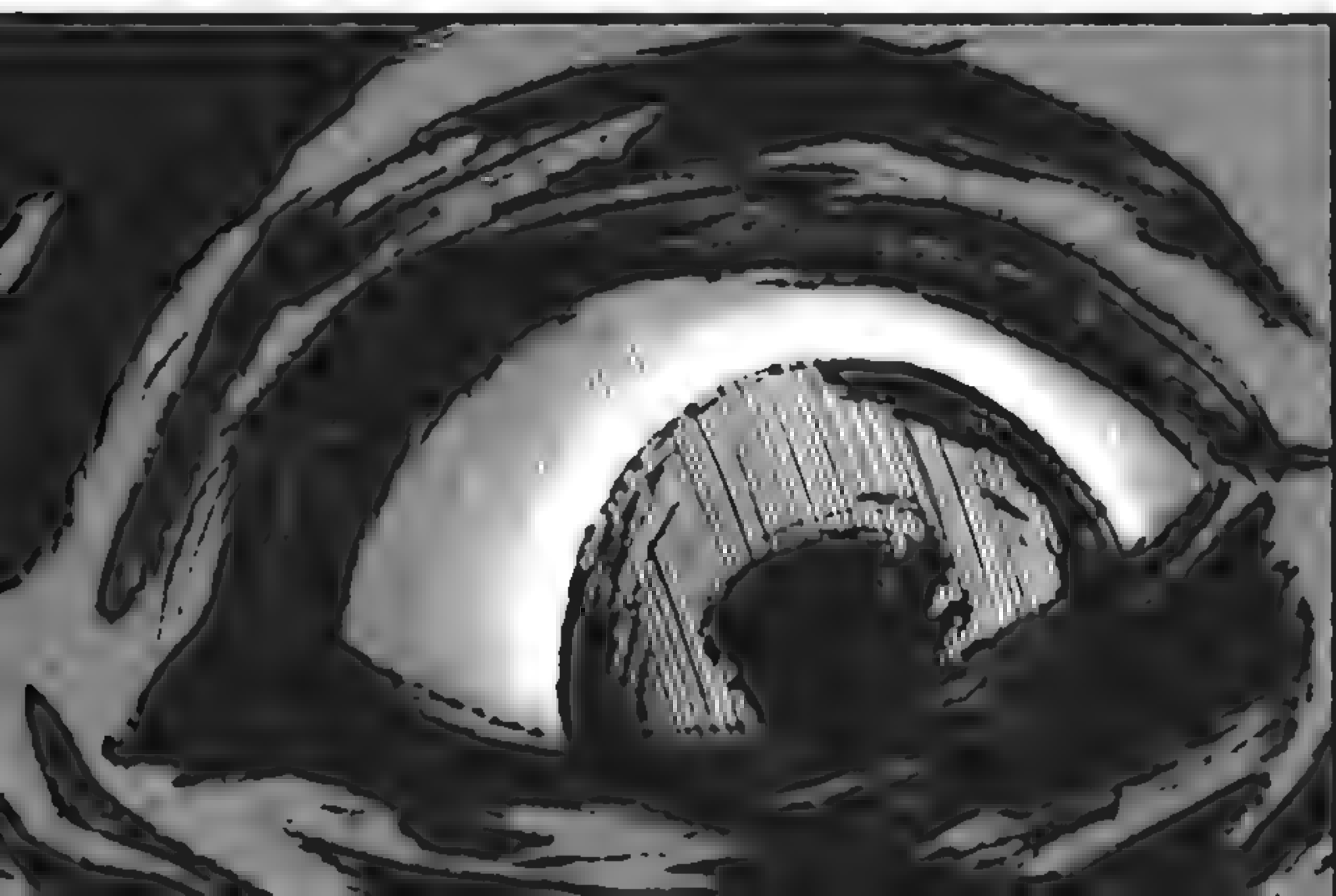
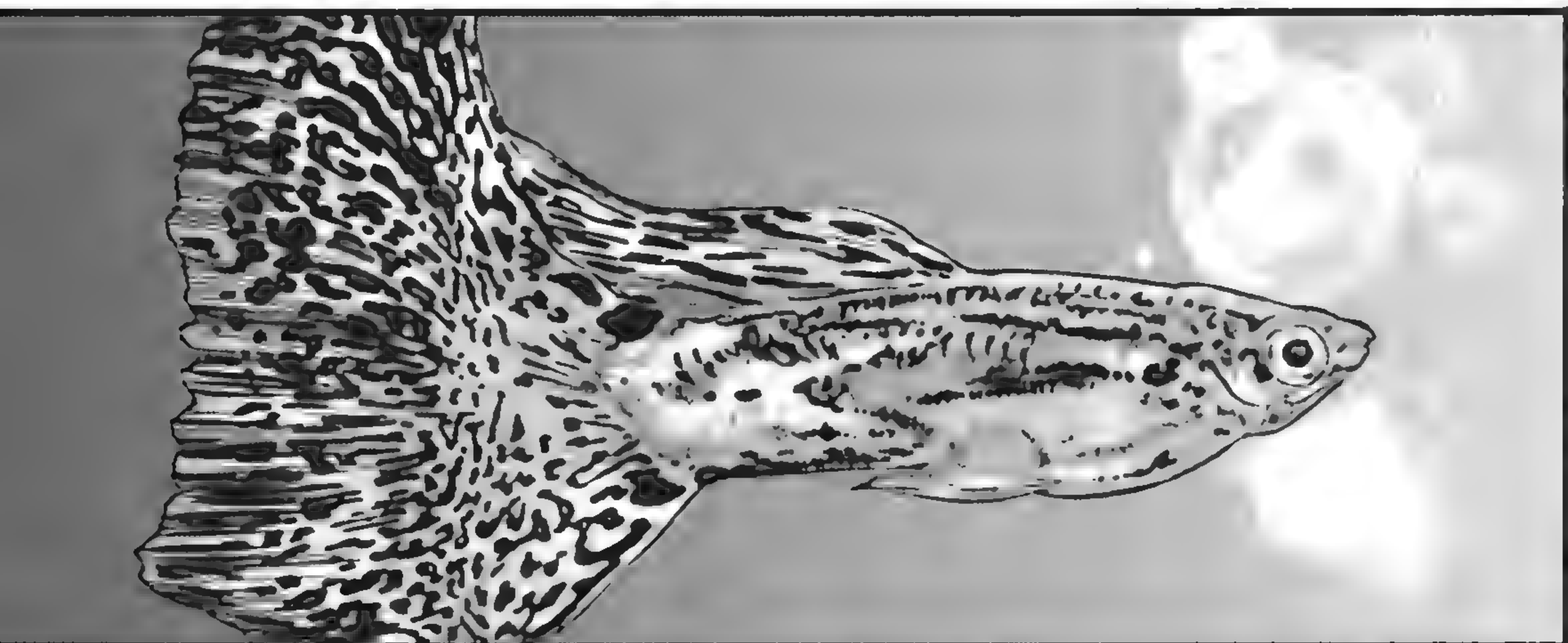




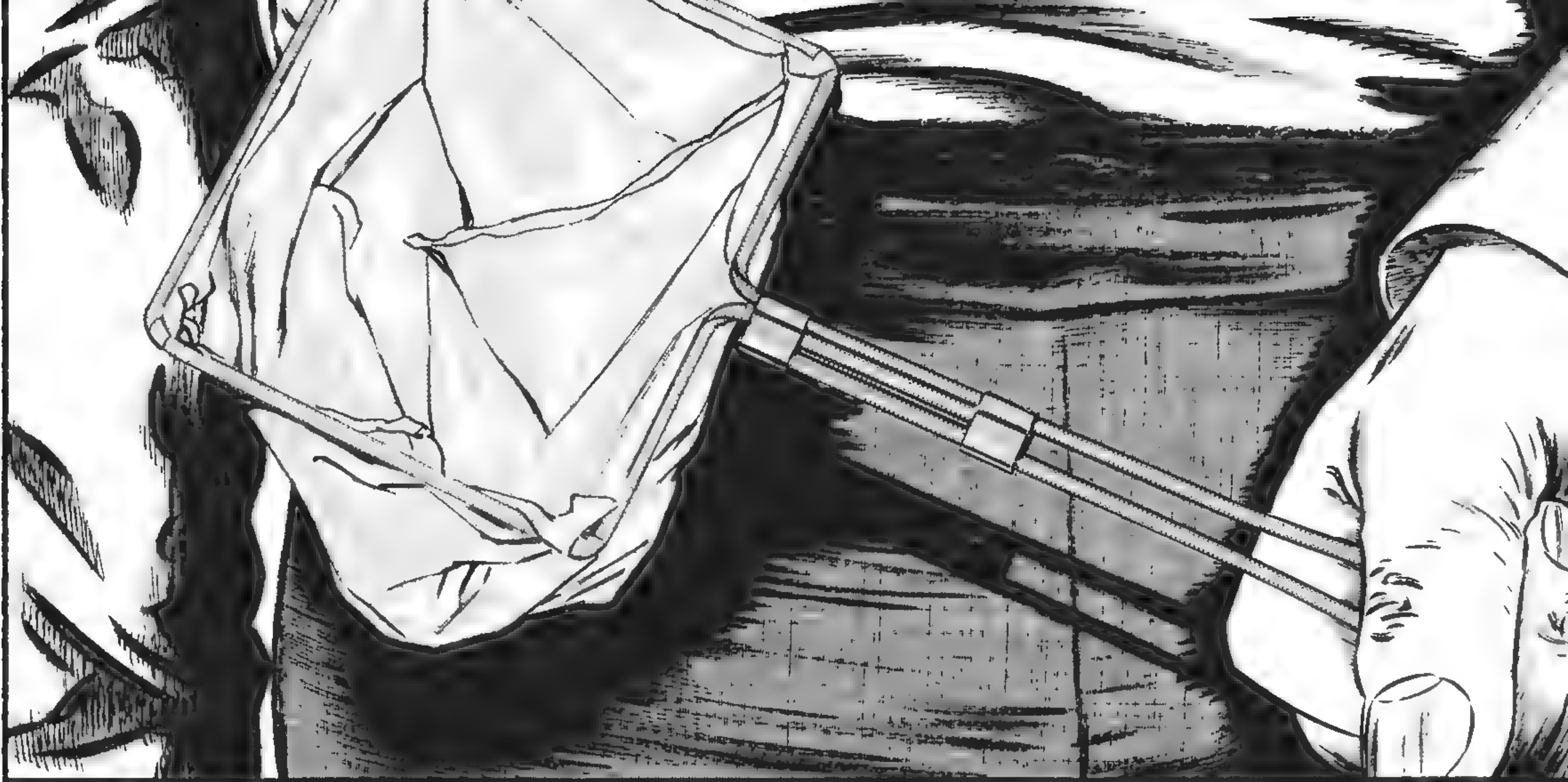




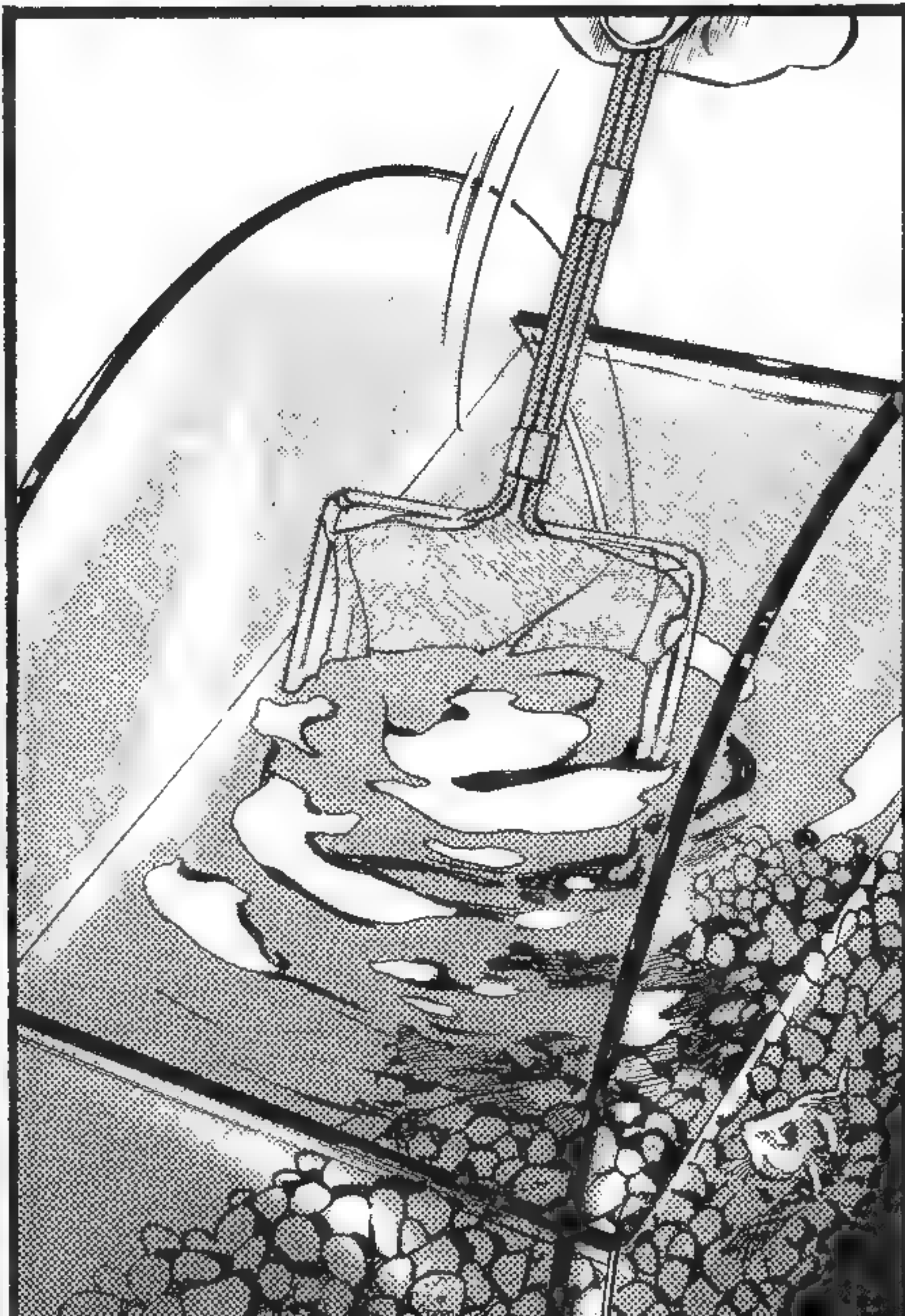
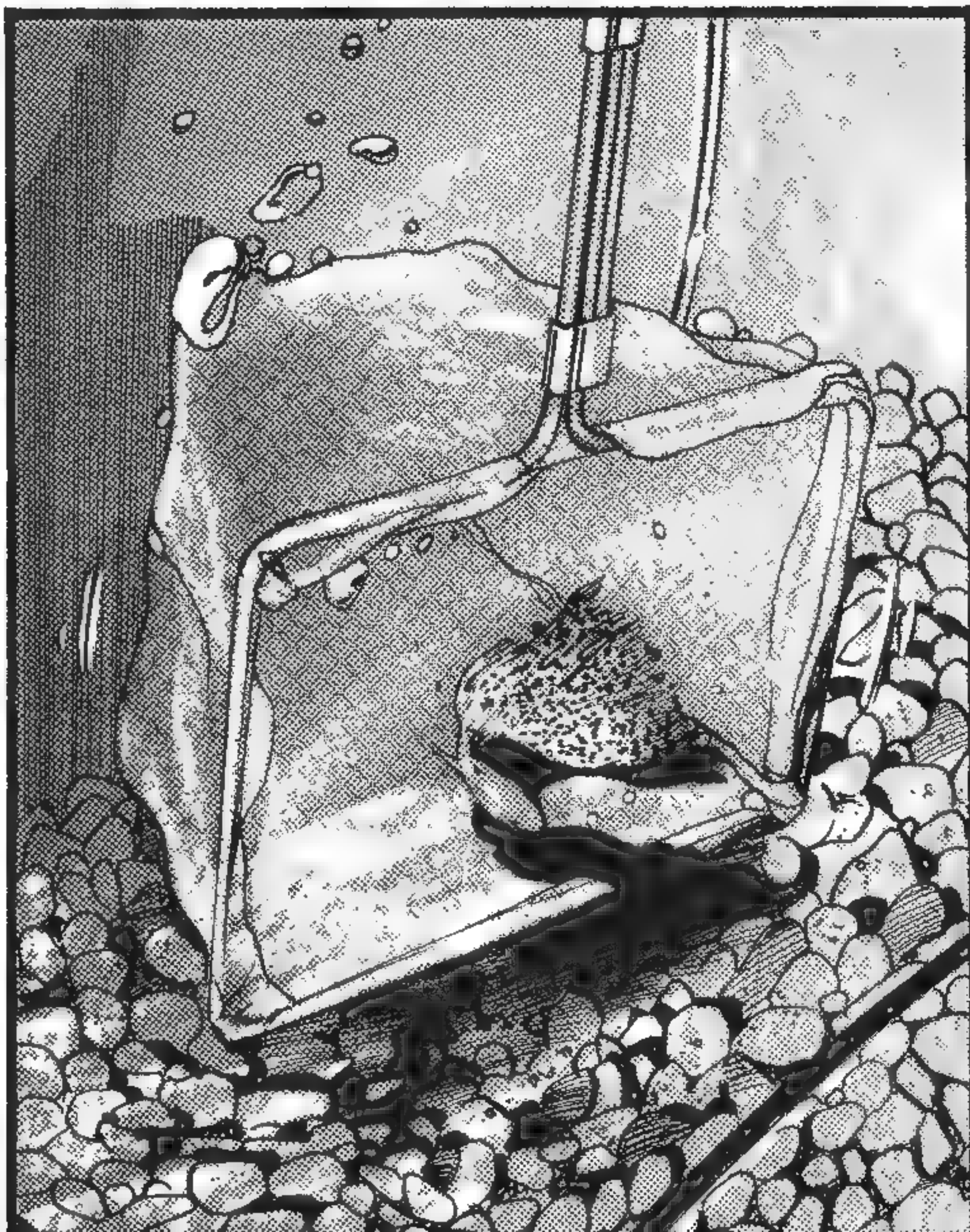




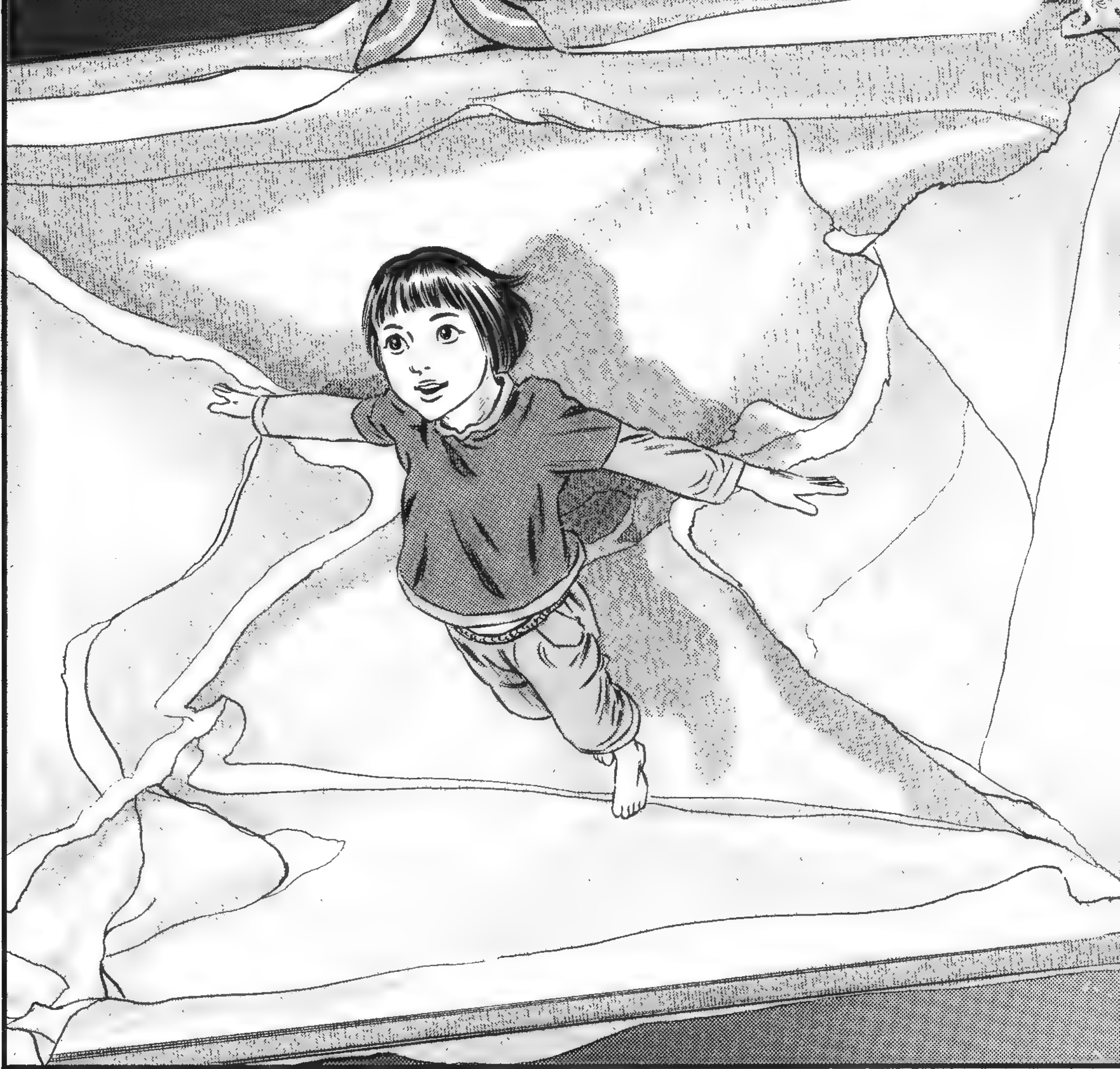




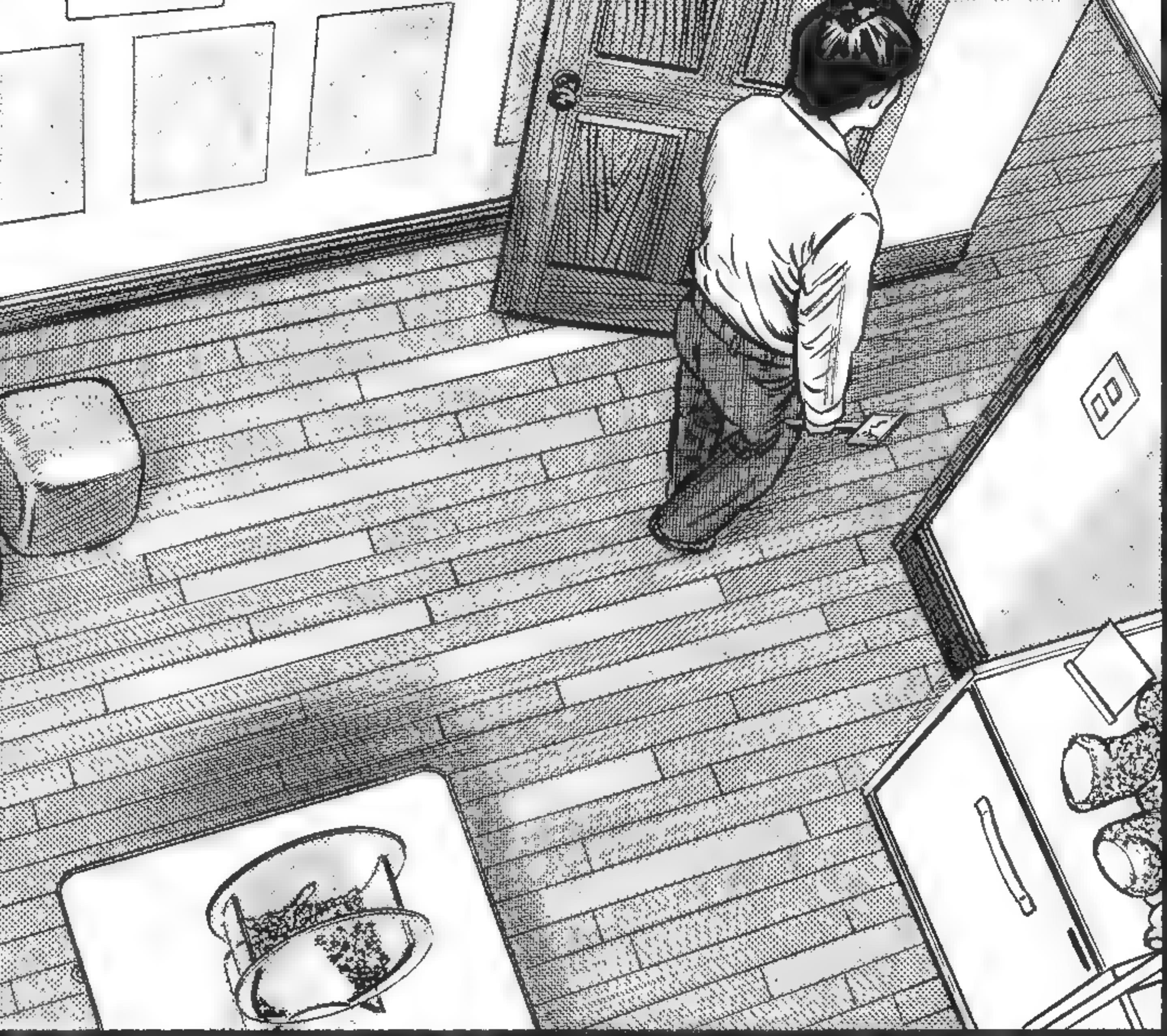








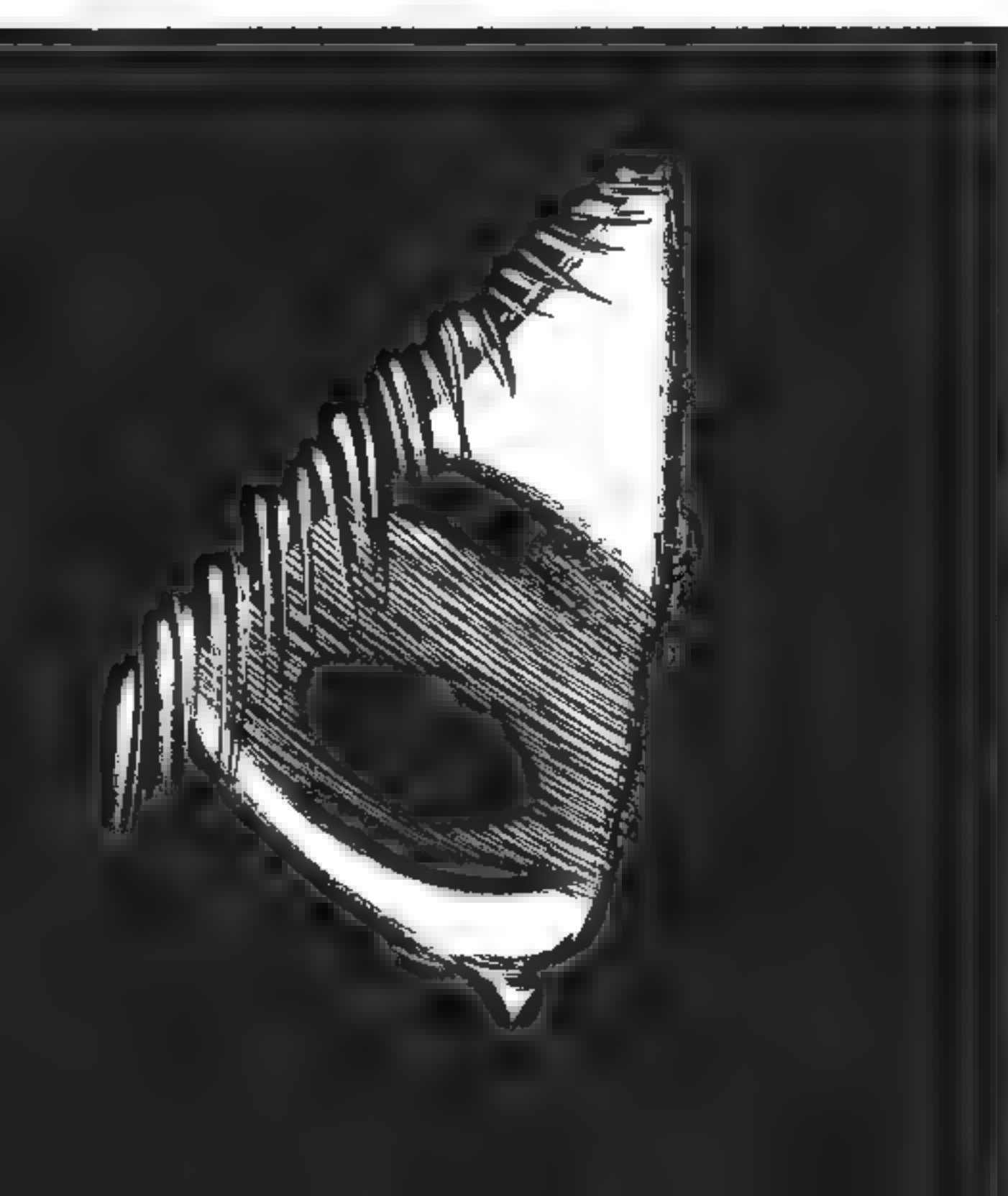
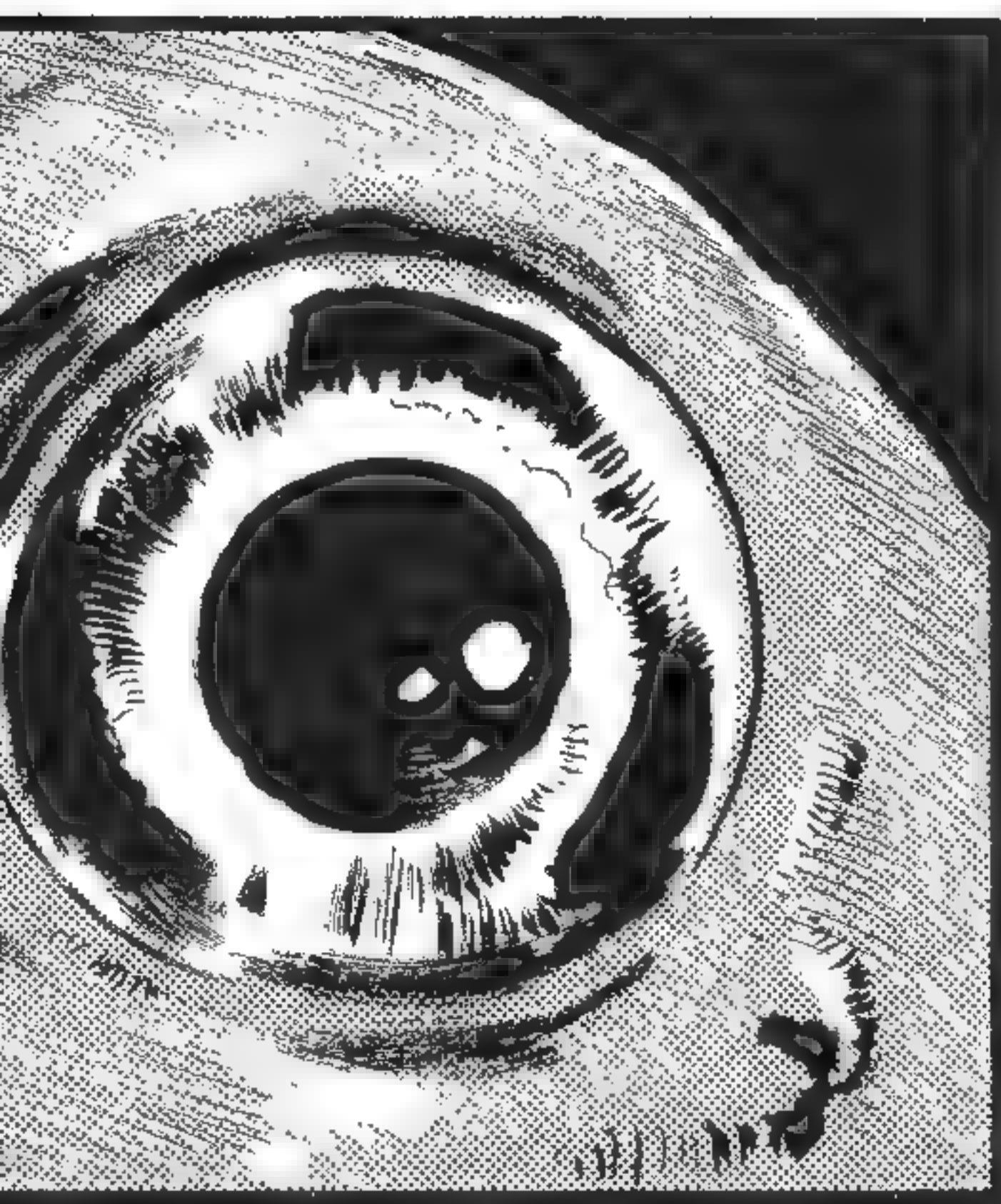
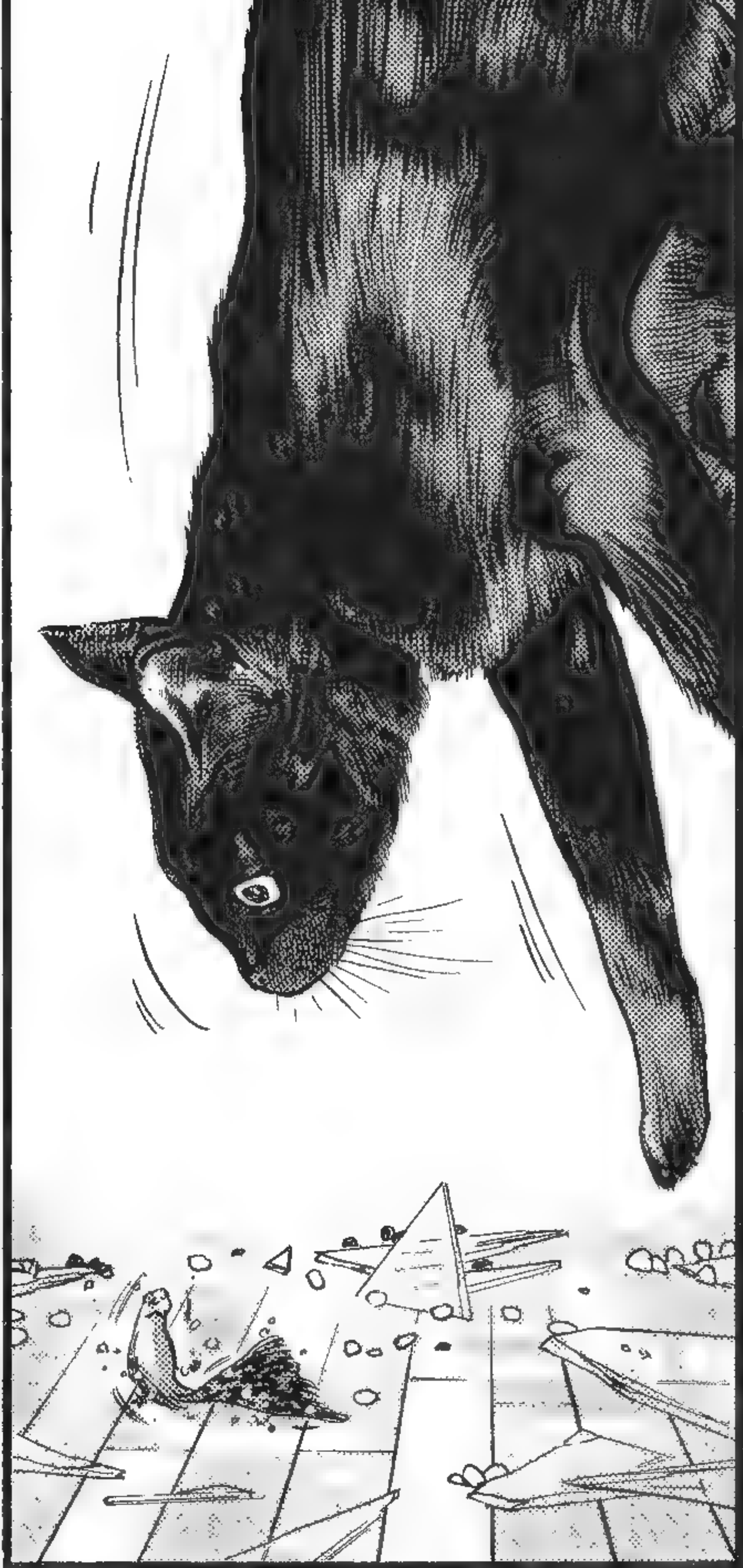




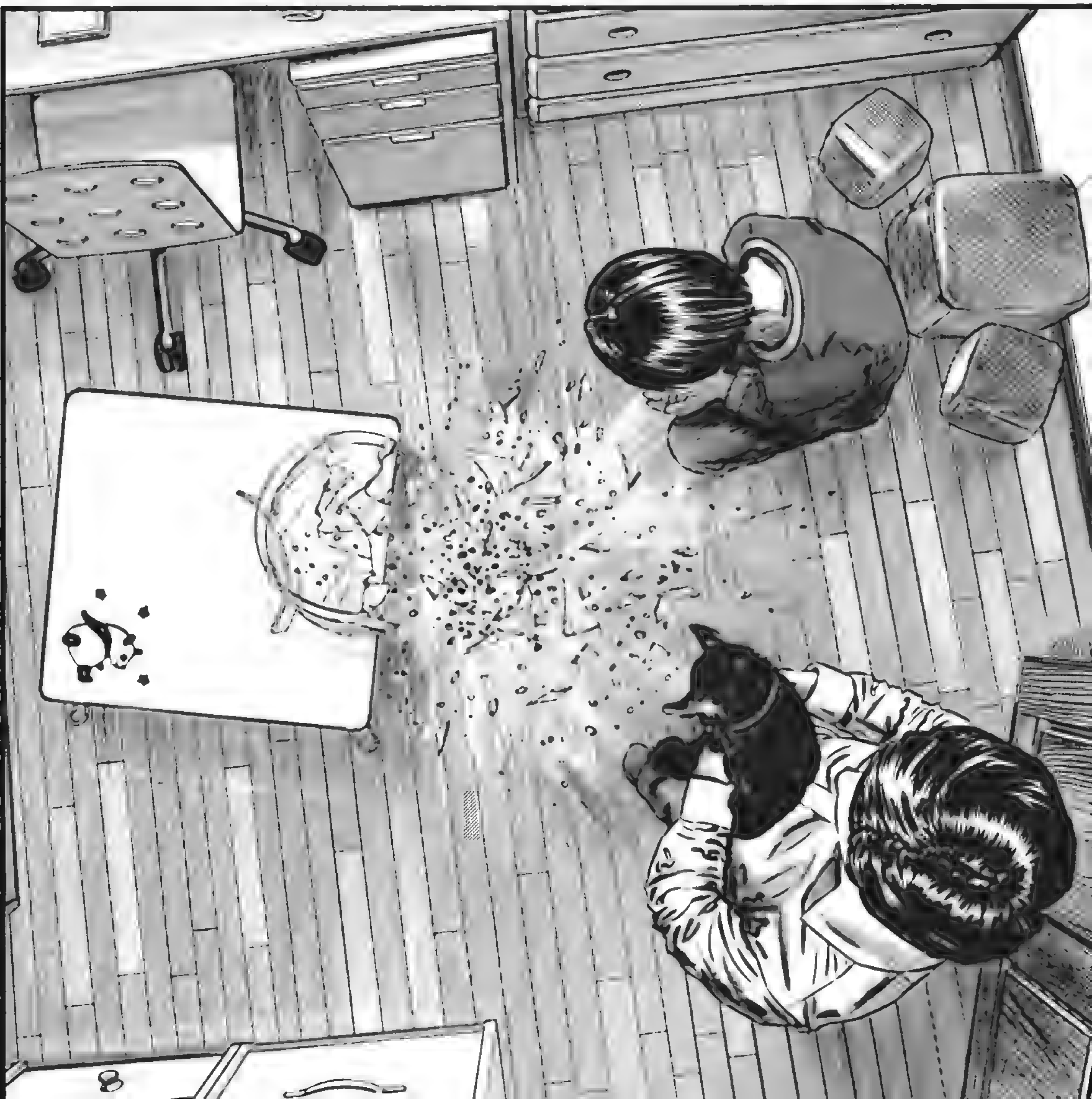
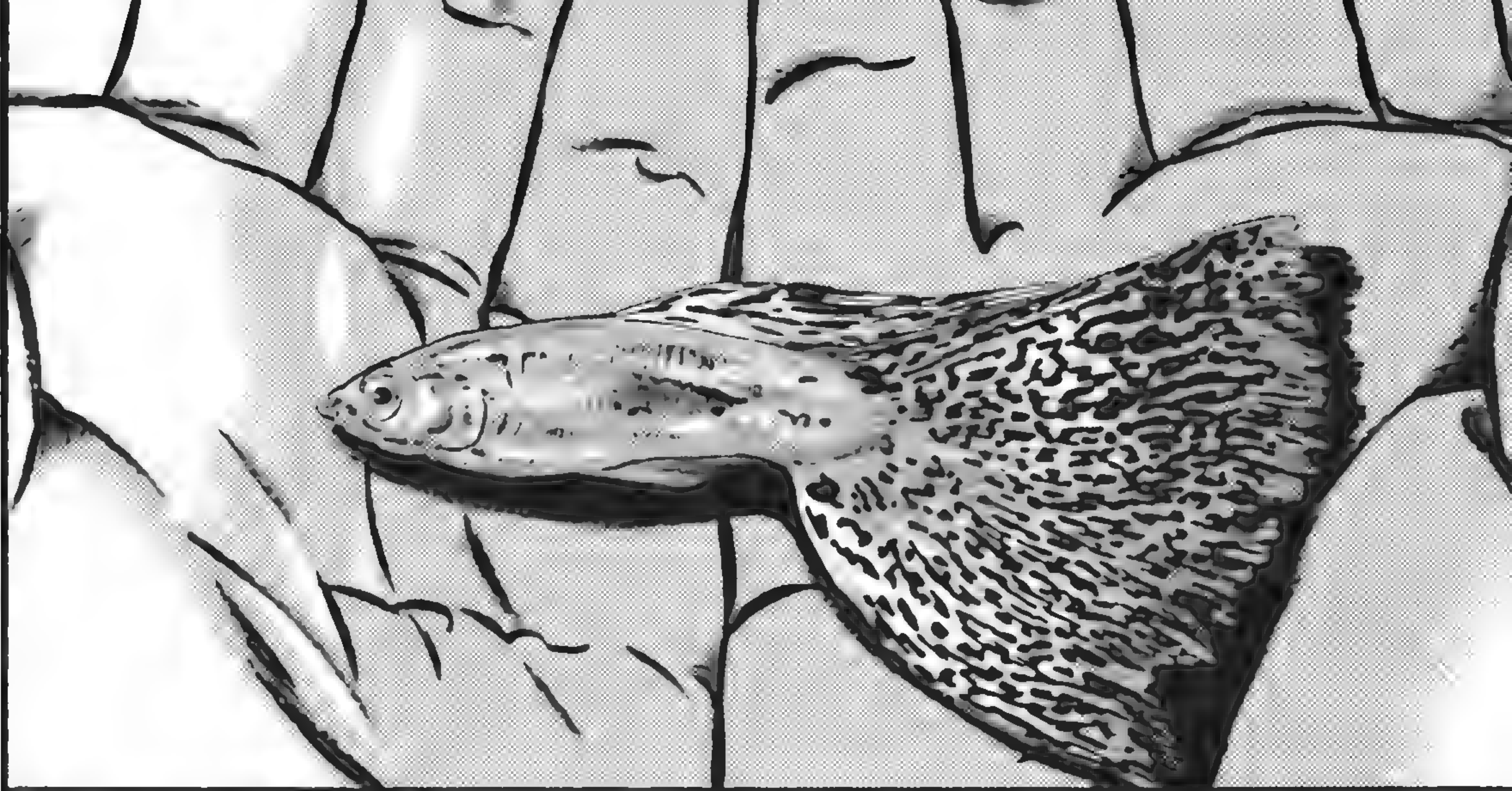




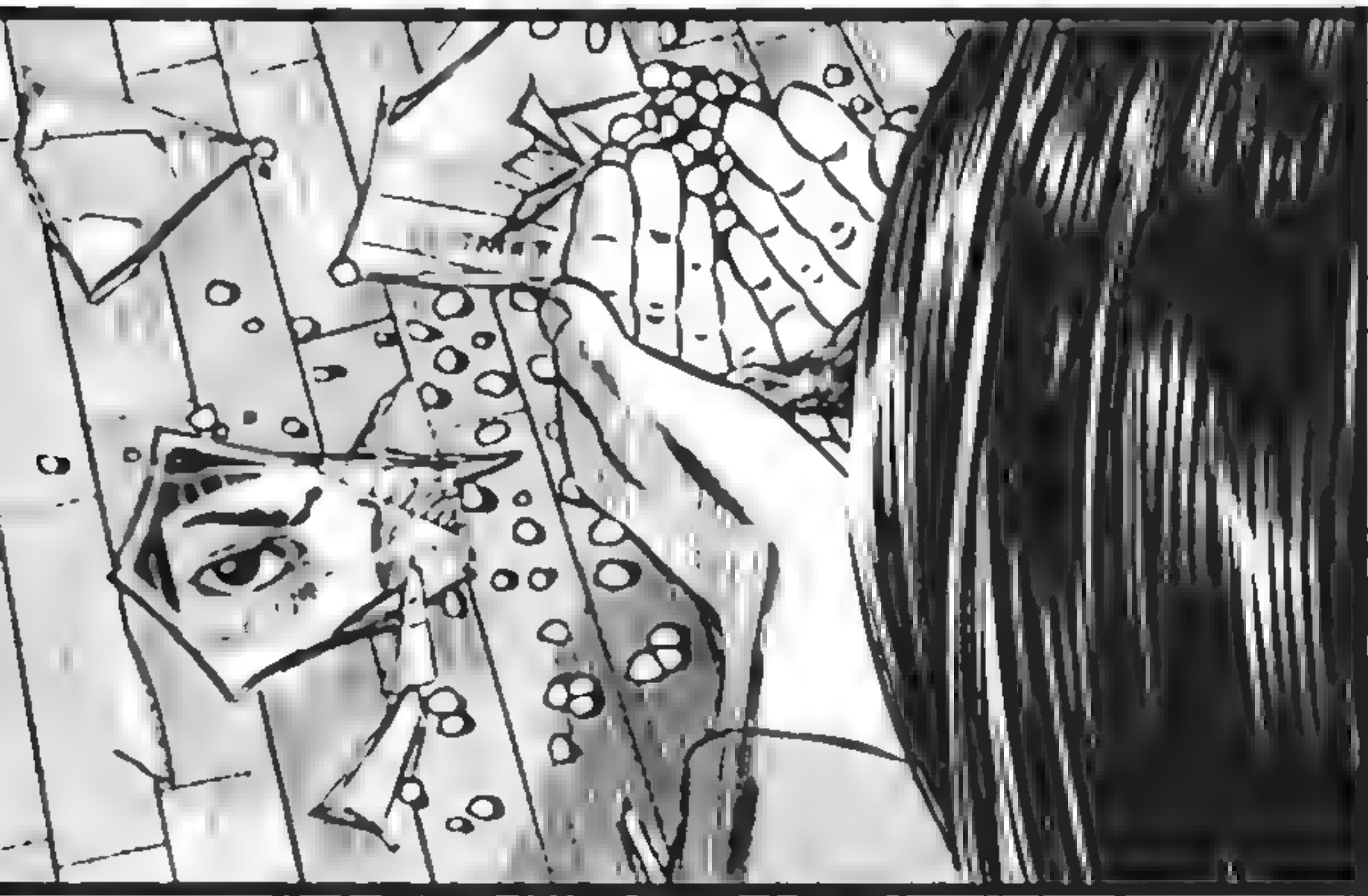
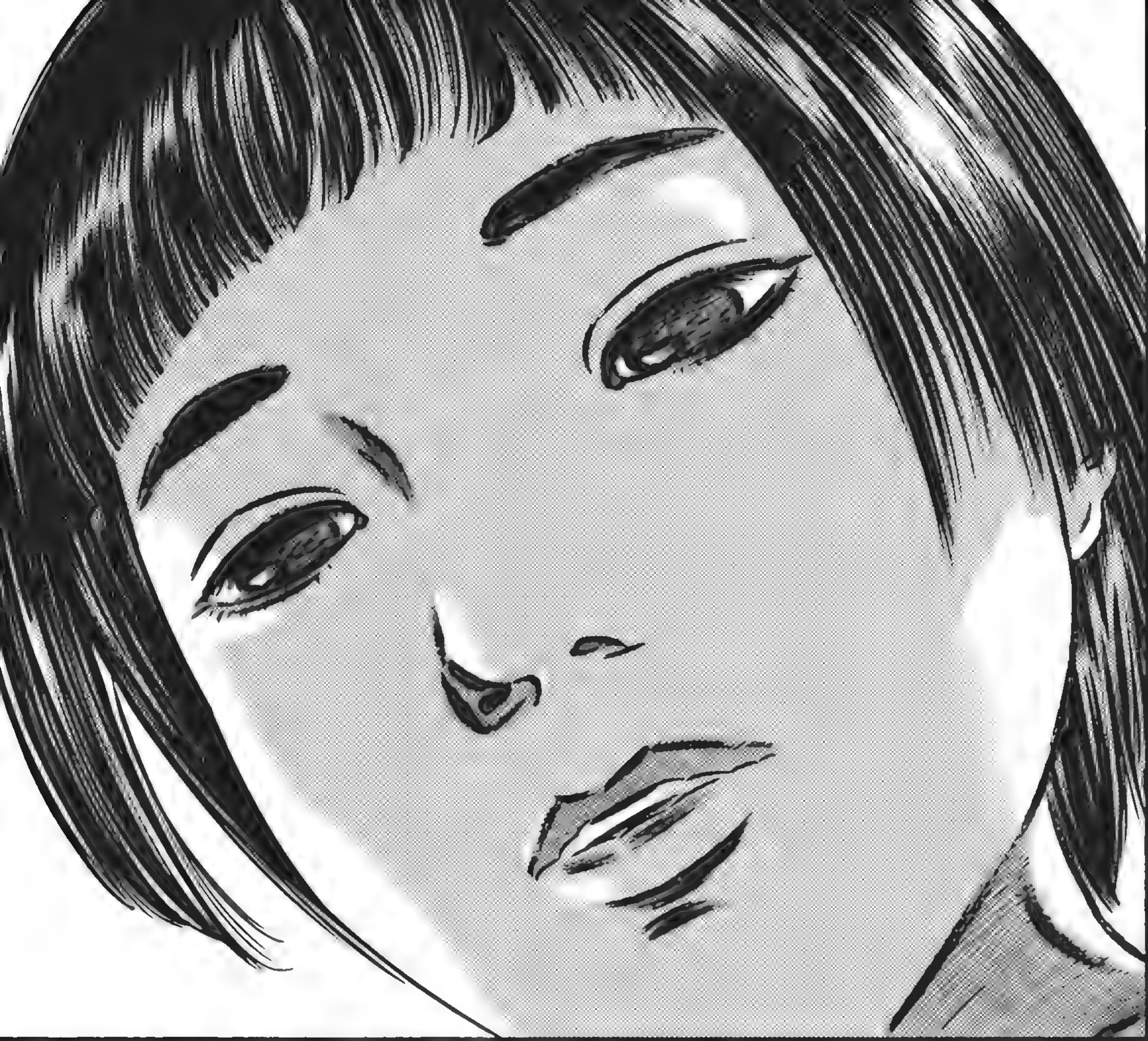








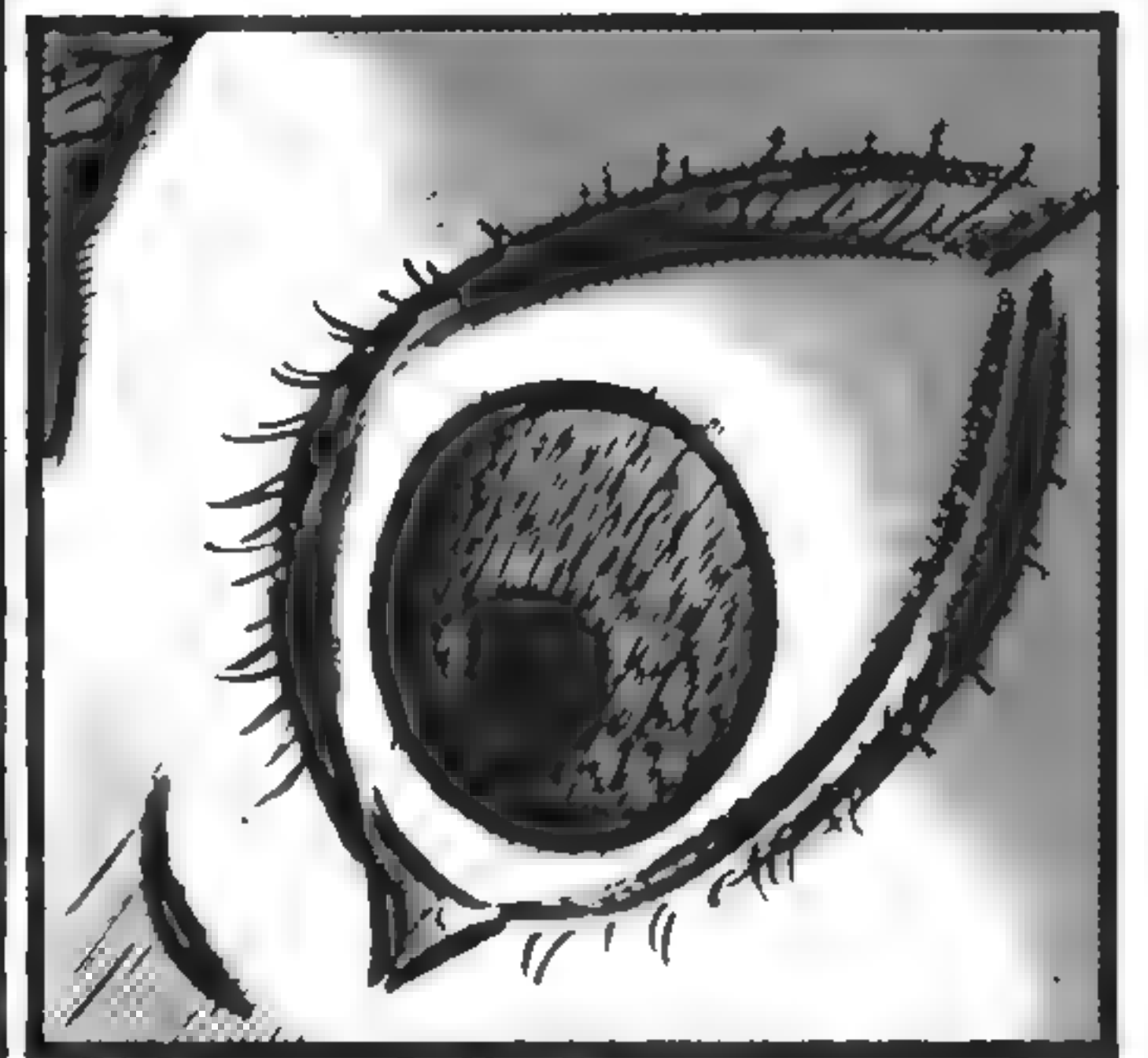








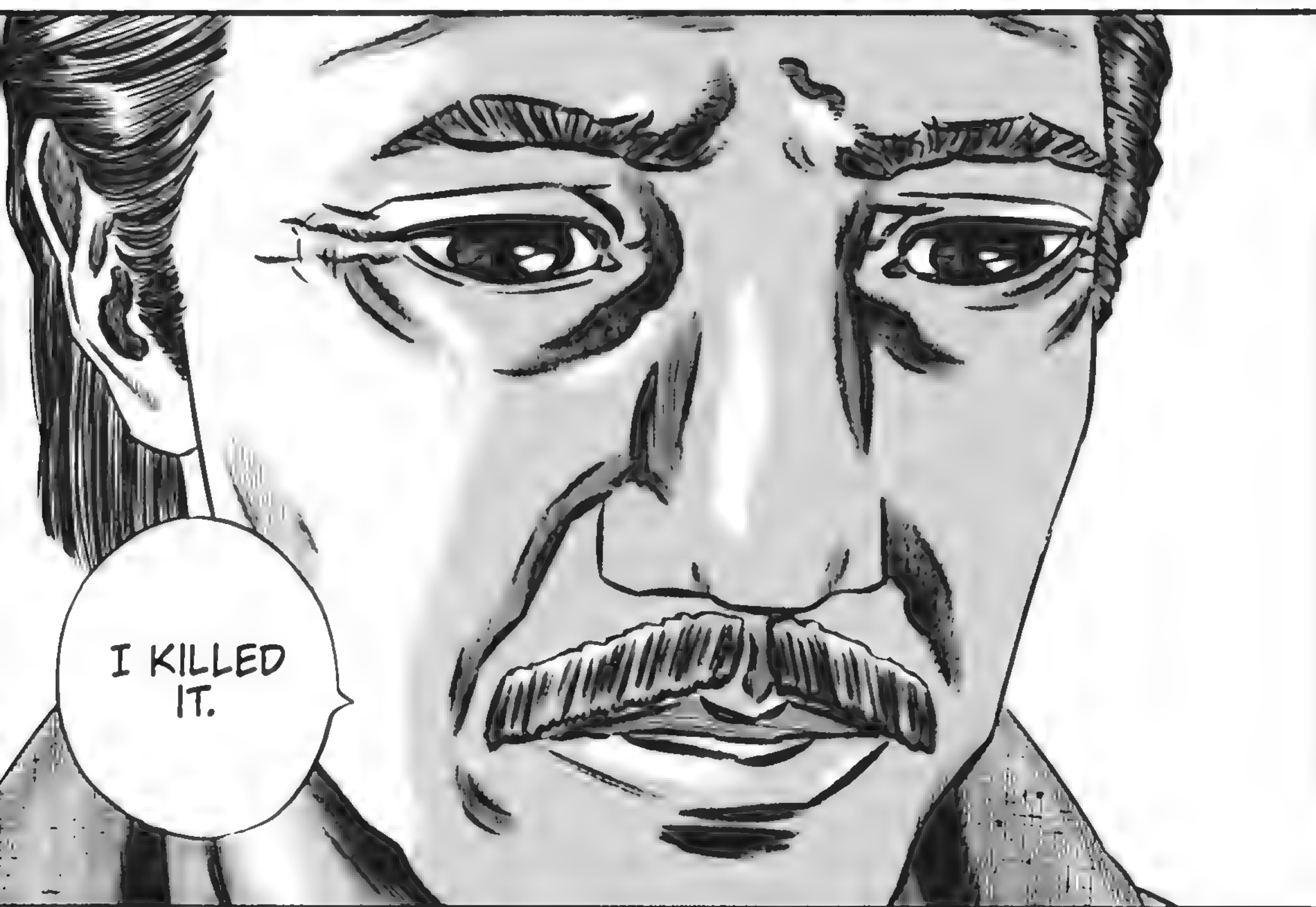






















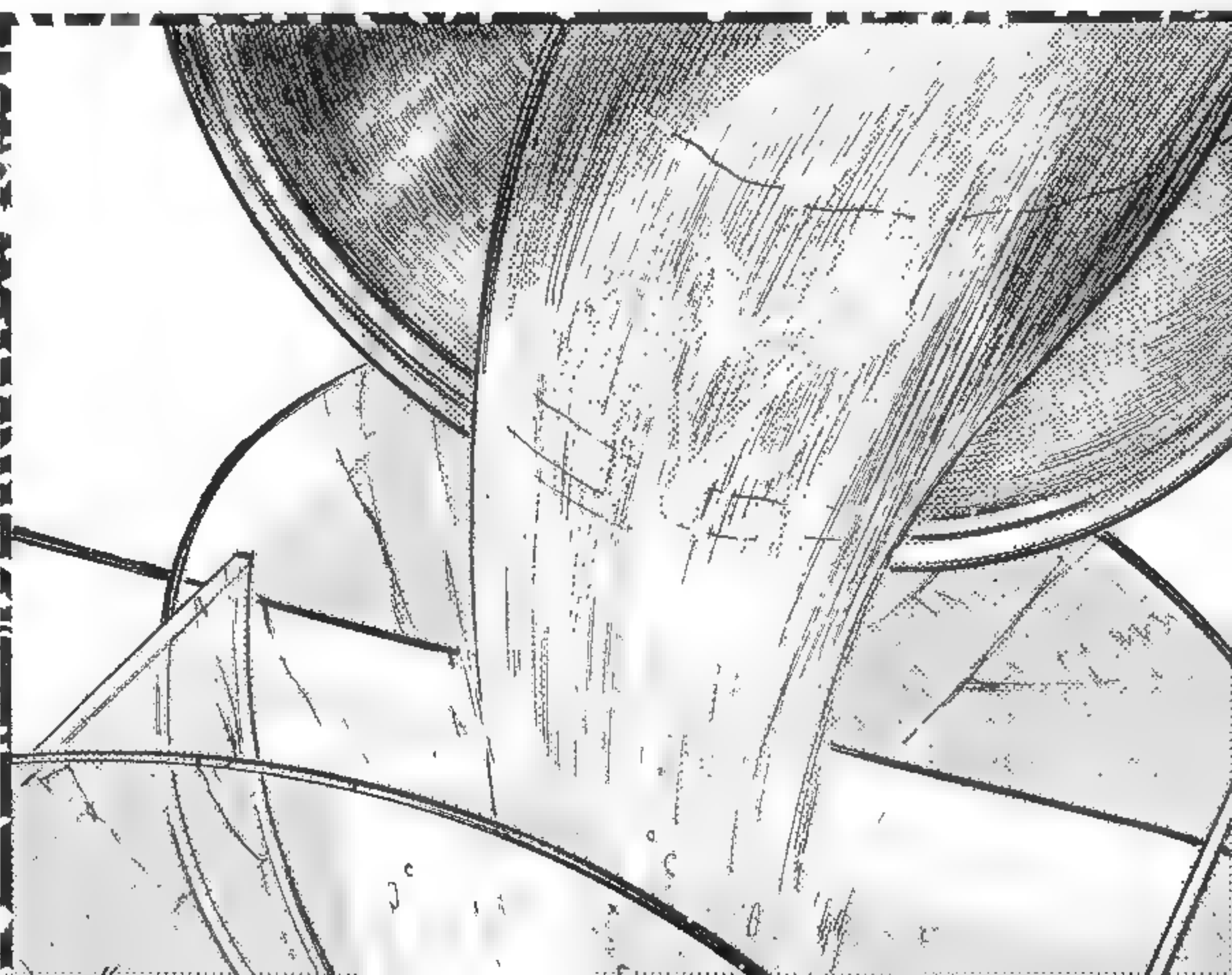
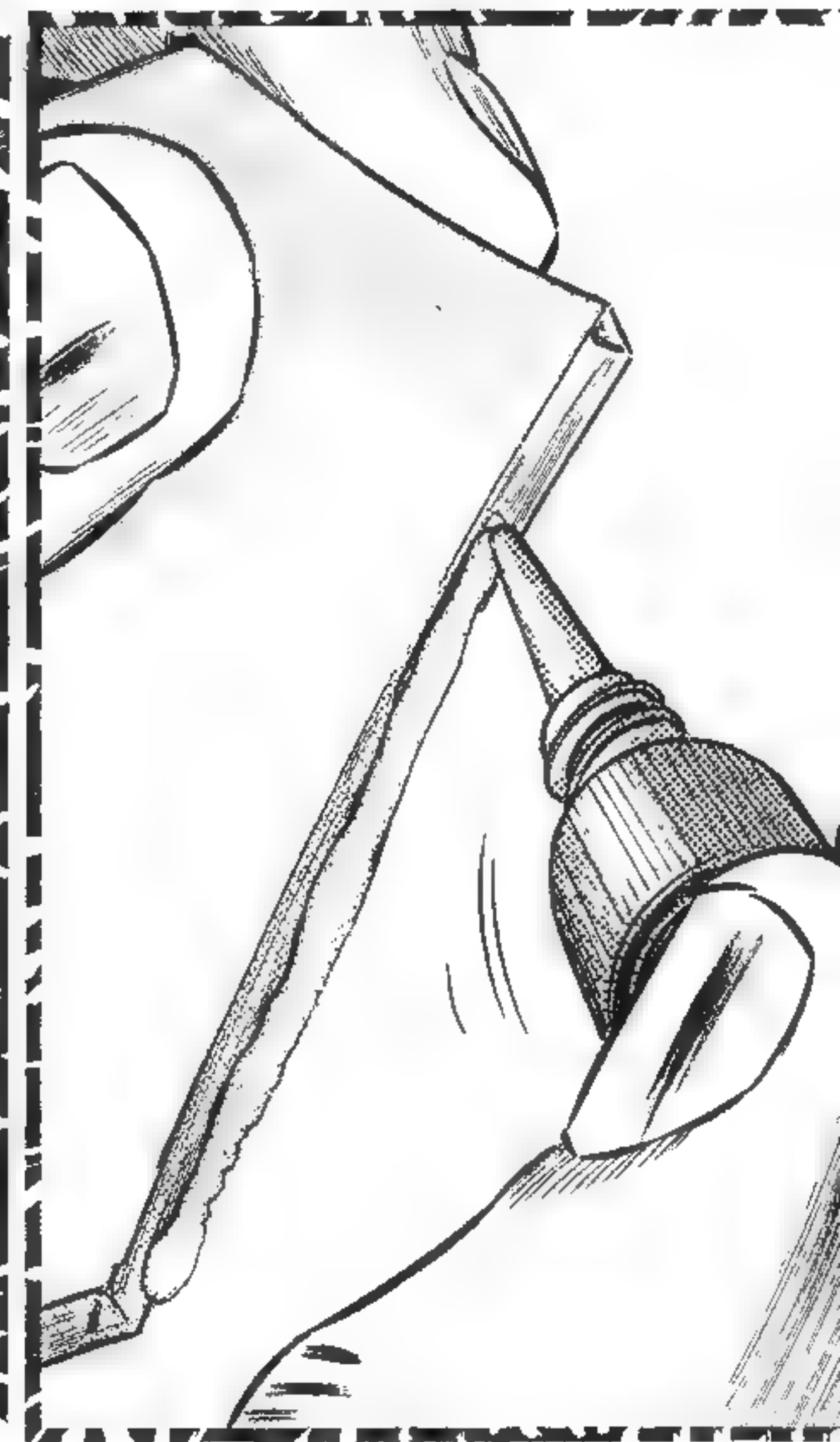
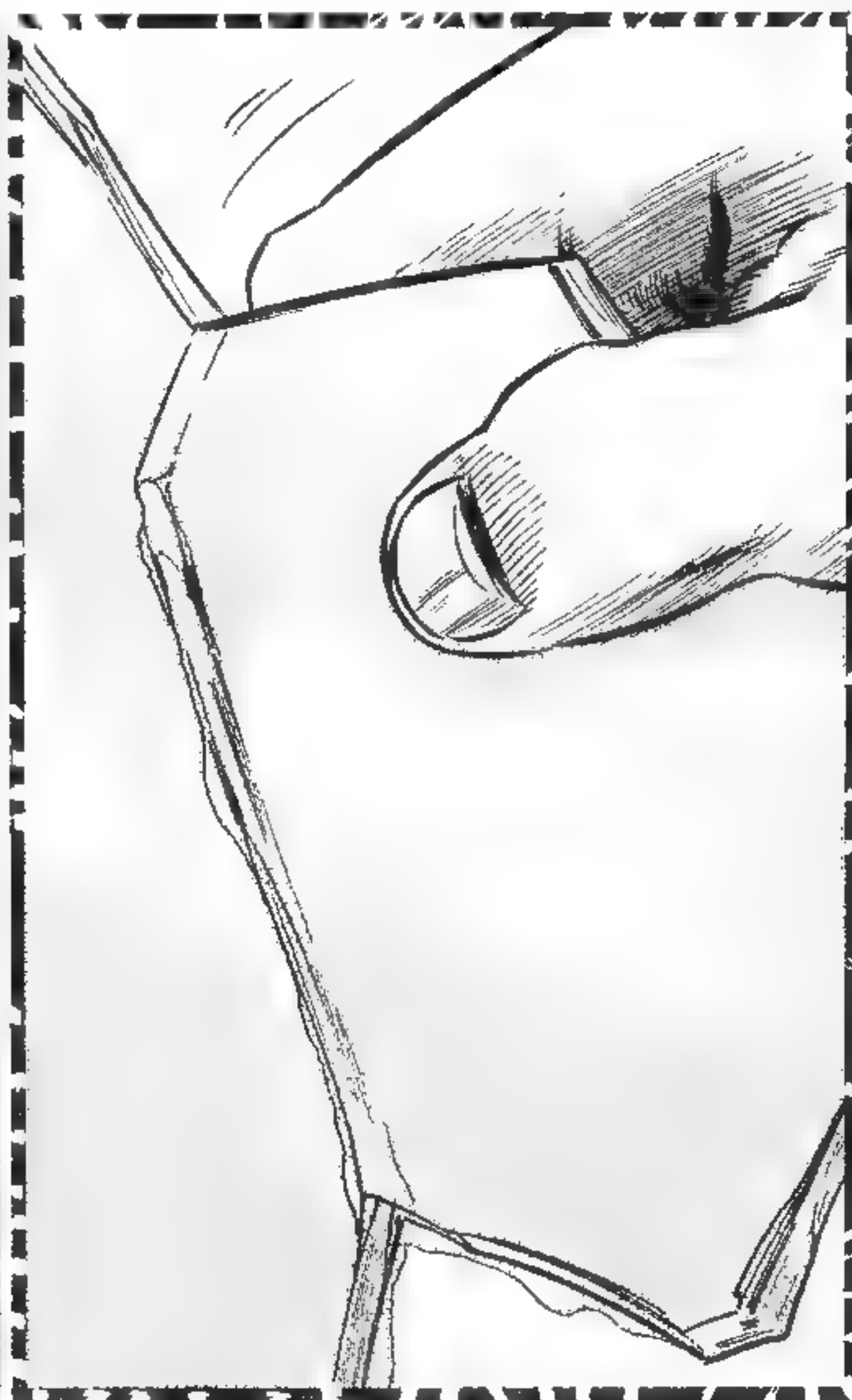
MANABU...  
I'M SORRY...



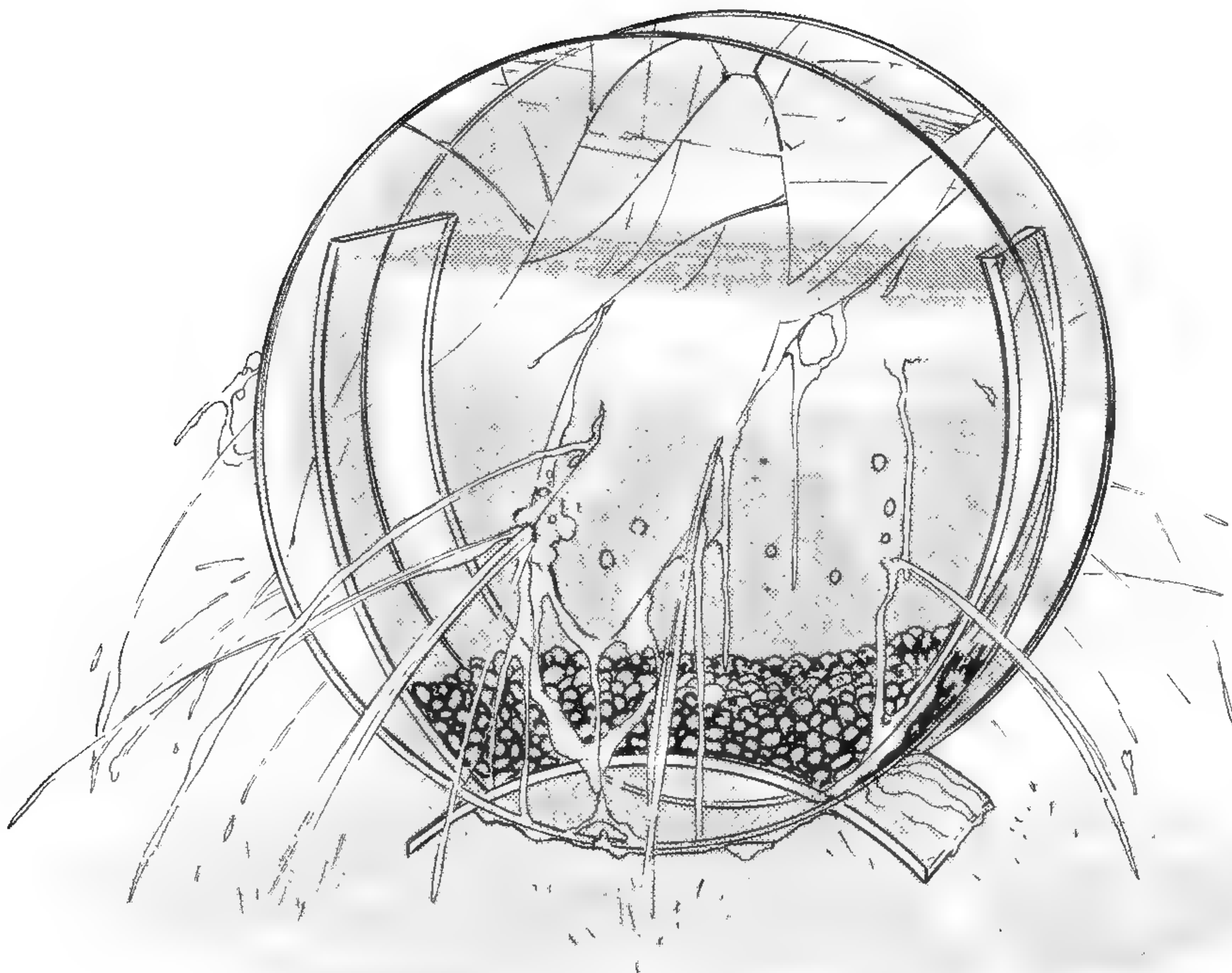


















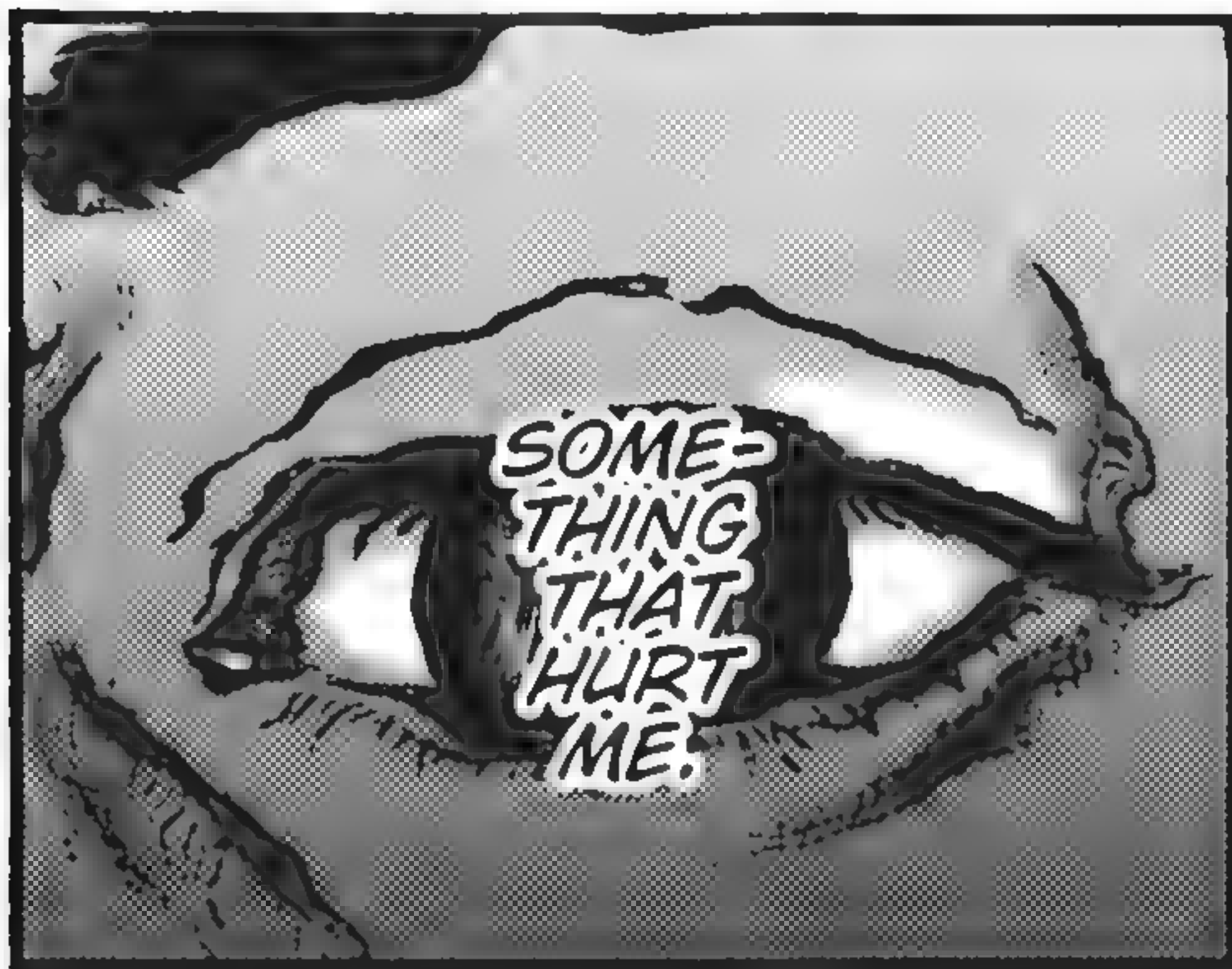






BEFORE I  
CHANGED  
MY FACE.

I MUST  
HAVE  
FELT  
REAL  
AT  
SOME  
POINT.



SOME-  
THING  
THAT  
HURT  
ME.

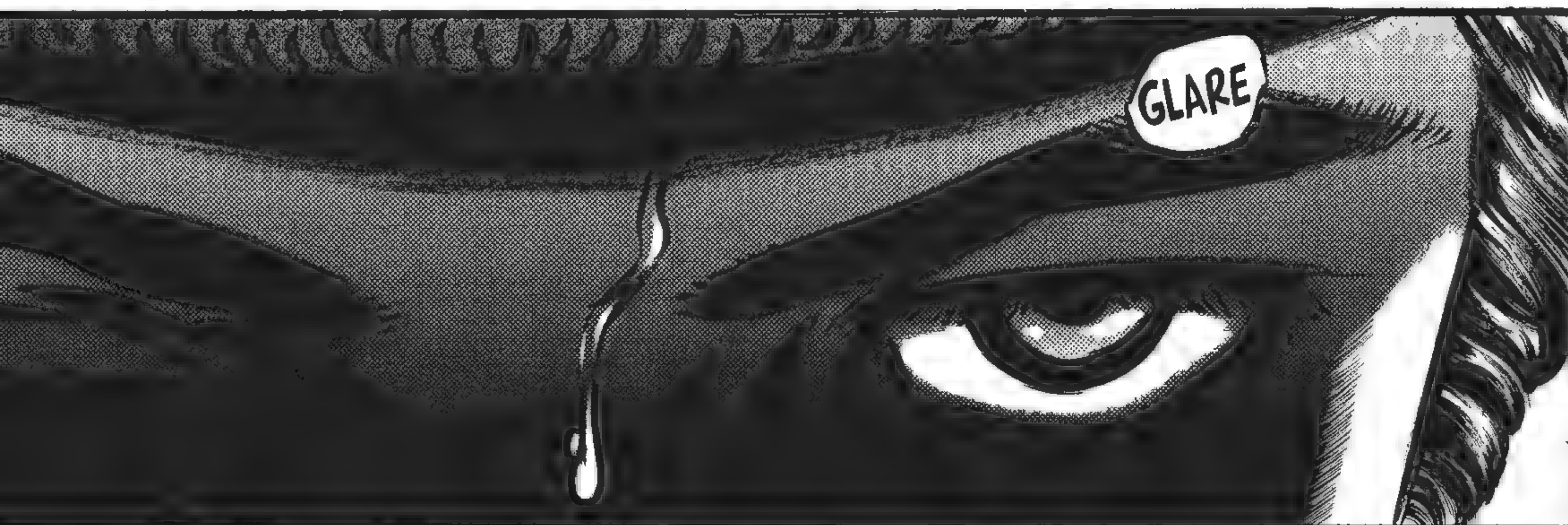


BUT  
WHAT?

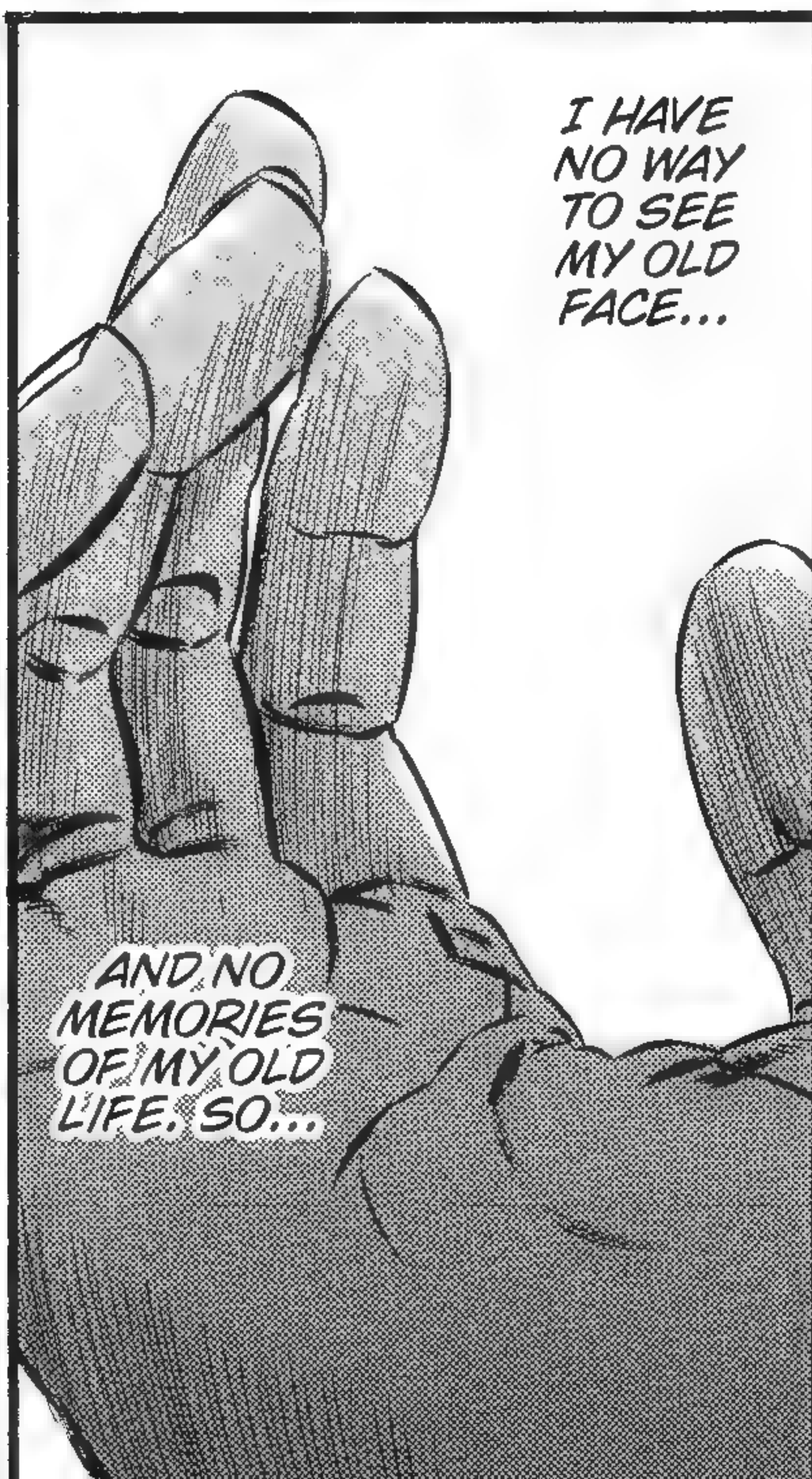


SOMETHING  
MUST HAVE  
HAPPENED  
BEFORE THE  
SURGERY.





THERE'S  
ONLY  
ONE  
LEAD  
I CAN  
FOLLOW.



I HAVE  
NO WAY  
TO SEE  
MY OLD  
FACE...

AND NO  
MEMORIES  
OF MY OLD  
LIFE. SO...



THESE  
HOMUNCULI!











YOU DAMN  
TWISTED  
ECHOES  
OF MY OWN  
PSYCHE...



WHO  
KNOWS  
MY TRUE  
FACE?

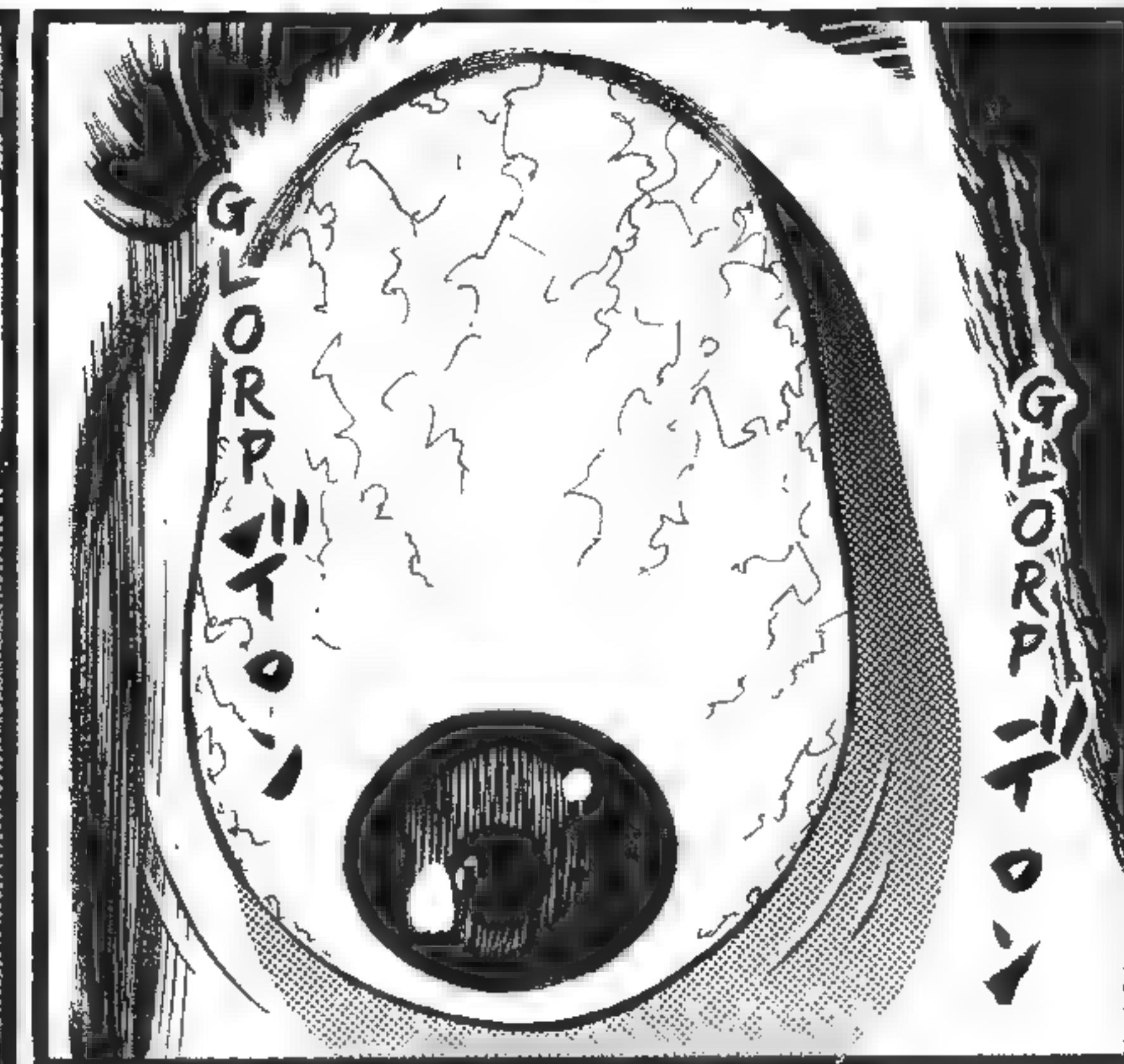


WHICH  
ONE OF  
YOU IS  
IT?





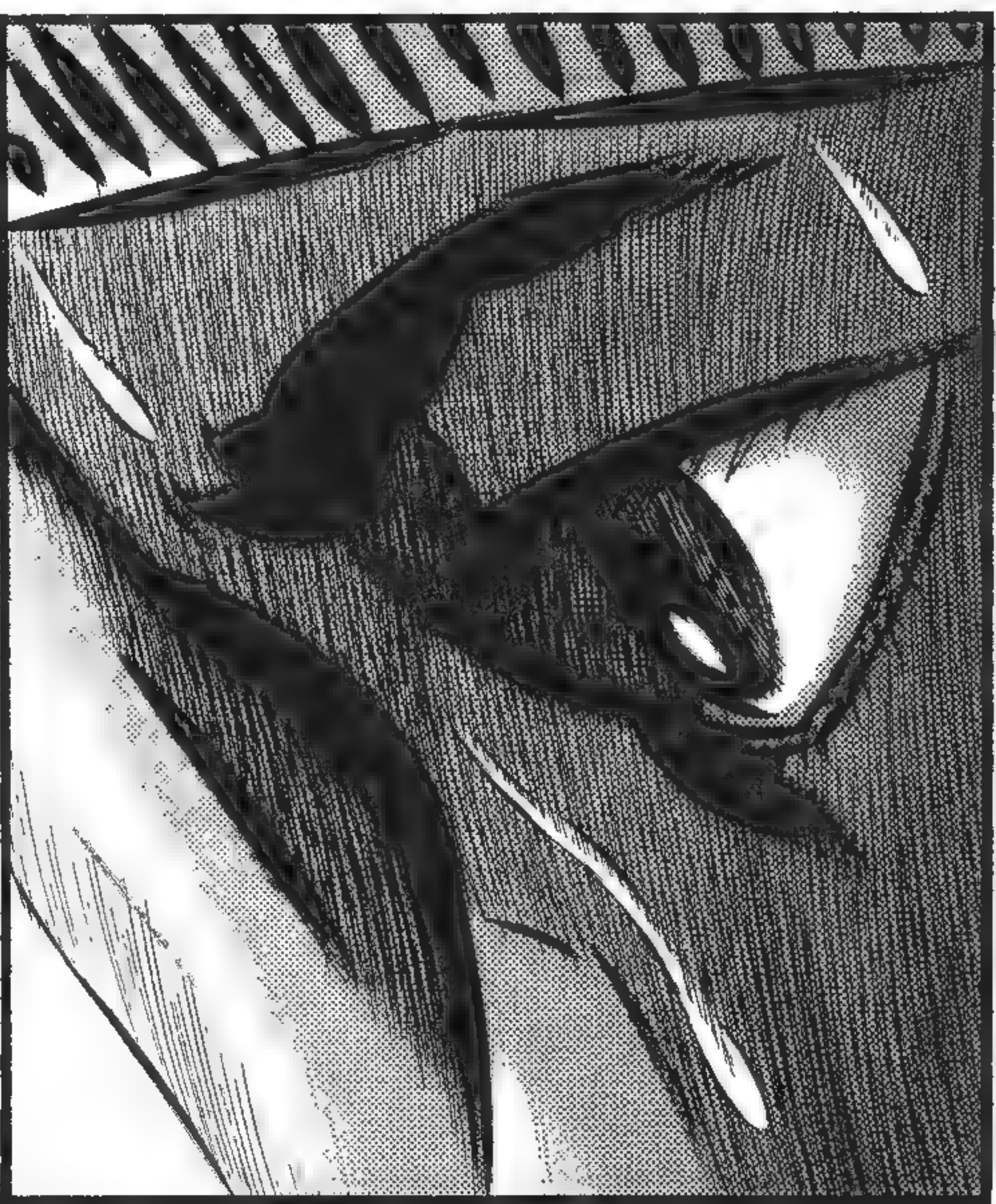
















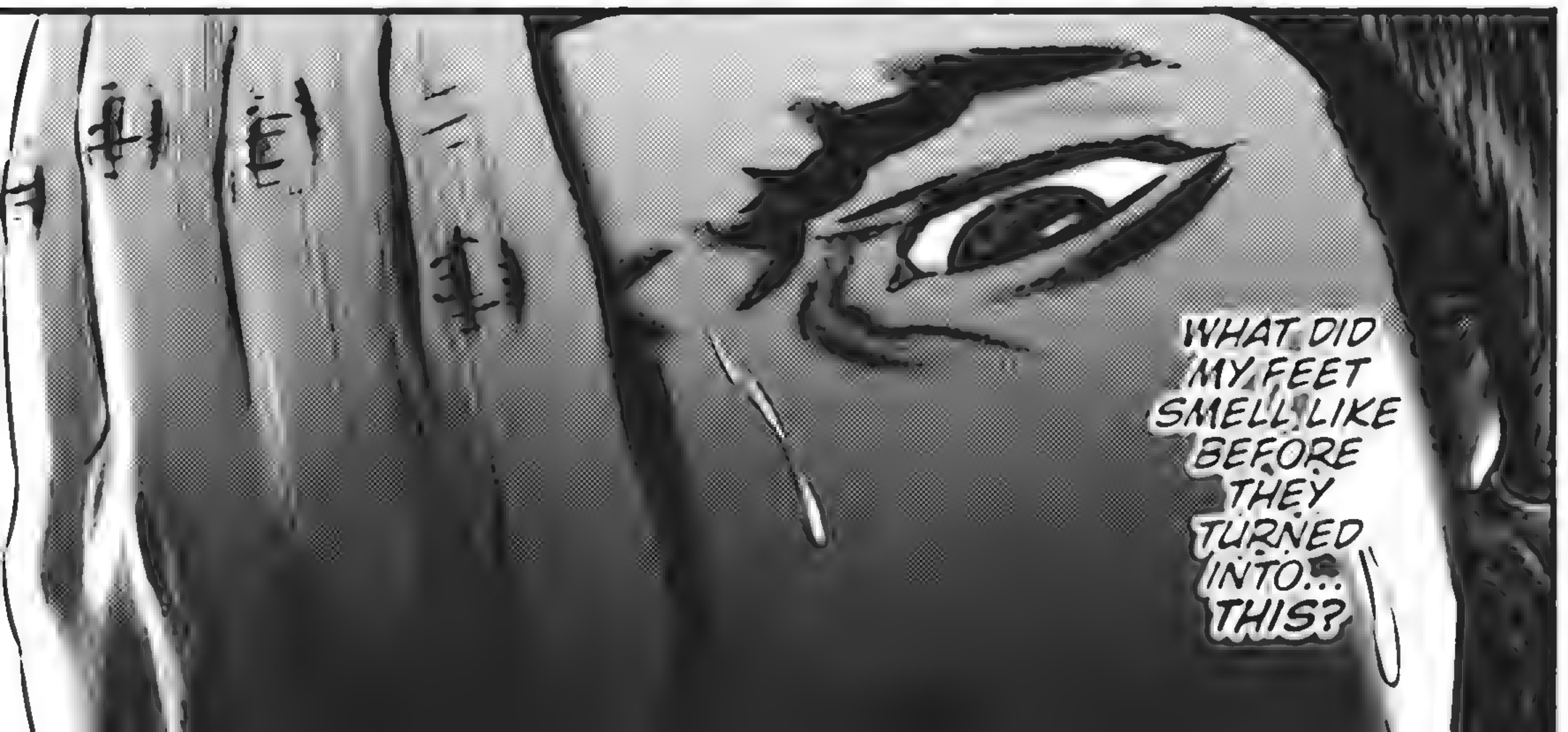




FEET...  
NUMB  
TO THE  
WORLD.



FEET  
DEVOID  
OF THE  
SHARP  
STENCH  
OF LIFE.



WHAT DID  
MY FEET  
SMELL LIKE  
BEFORE  
THEY  
TURNED  
INTO...  
THIS?



WAIT.



WOULD  
IT EVEN  
MATTER IF  
I NEVER  
GOT MY  
MEMORIES  
BACK?



WHAT DOES  
IT MATTER  
HOW THEY  
SMELL,  
ANYWAY?

THAT'S RIGHT...





I DON'T  
NEED  
TO FEEL  
REAL.





EVEN IF  
I FOUND  
MY "TRUE  
SELF"...

WHAT  
GOOD  
WOULD  
IT DO  
ME?



WOULDN'T  
CHANGE  
MY  
PRESENT.

FIGURING  
OUT MY  
PAST...



AND ON  
THAT  
NOTE...  
WHO THE  
HELL  
AM I?



WHAT THE  
HELL ARE  
HOMUNCULI,  
IN THE  
GRAND  
SCHEME OF  
THINGS?

















IF YA GOT  
YER EYES ON  
THE FLOOR,  
EVERYTHIN'  
ELSE...FADES  
INTO NOTHIN'.

CAN'T SEE  
THE WORLD  
LIKE THAT,  
Y'KNOW.



YER STILL  
YOUNG. YOU  
GOT CHANCES  
LEFT.

YA CAN'T  
BLOCK OUT  
THE WORLD  
JUST YET.













WHAT YOU WAS  
DOIN' THERE,  
GLARIN' DOWN  
ATCHER FEET...  
THAT'S HOW  
WE WALK. THE  
DOWN-AN'-OUTS.



...



AND WE  
AIN'T DOIN'  
IT TO SCAN  
FOR LOOSE  
CHANGE.



'CAUSE  
WE DON'T  
WANNA FEEL  
NOTHIN'.  
WHY?

WE DON'T  
WANT NOTHIN'  
TO HAPPEN TO  
US, GOOD OR  
BAD...



WE DON'T  
WANNA BE  
SEEN BY  
NOBODY.

WE DON'T  
WANNA LOOK  
AT NOBODY.















YA LOSE  
SIGHT OF  
WHERE THE  
HELL YOU  
ARE.


AFTER A  
WHILE, IF YA  
KEEP REJECTIN'  
EVERYTHING IN  
THE WORLD BUT  
YER OWN FEET...

EVENTUALLY,  
YA START TO  
THINK, "DO I  
EVEN EXIST  
AT ALL?"






ONCE YOU HAVE  
THAT THOUGHT,  
Y'GET DESPERATE.  
WANNA DOUBLE-  
CHECK YER  
REFLECTION TO  
MAKE SURE YER  
STILL IN THERE.



BUT...YOU  
CAN'T. YOU  
AIN'T GOT  
THE GUTS  
TO EVEN  
LOOK.

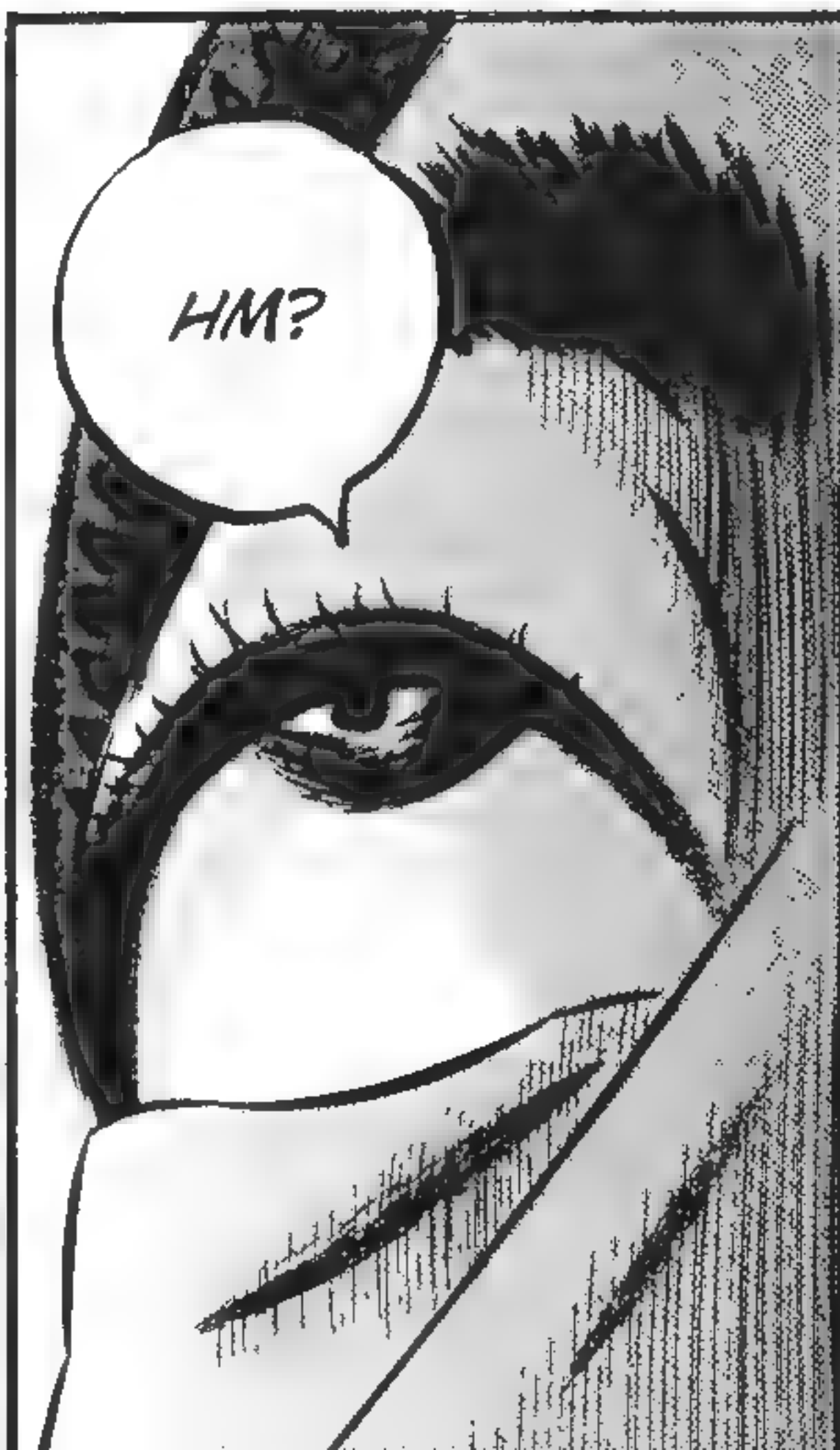


SO WE KEEP  
OUR EYES ON OUR  
OWN BEAT-UP SHOES  
JUST TO REMIND  
OURSELVES THEY'RE  
TOUCHIN' THE GROUND.  
THAT AT LEAST PART  
OF US IS CONNECTIN'  
WITH THE WORLD.  
THAT'S HOW  
WE LIVE.





















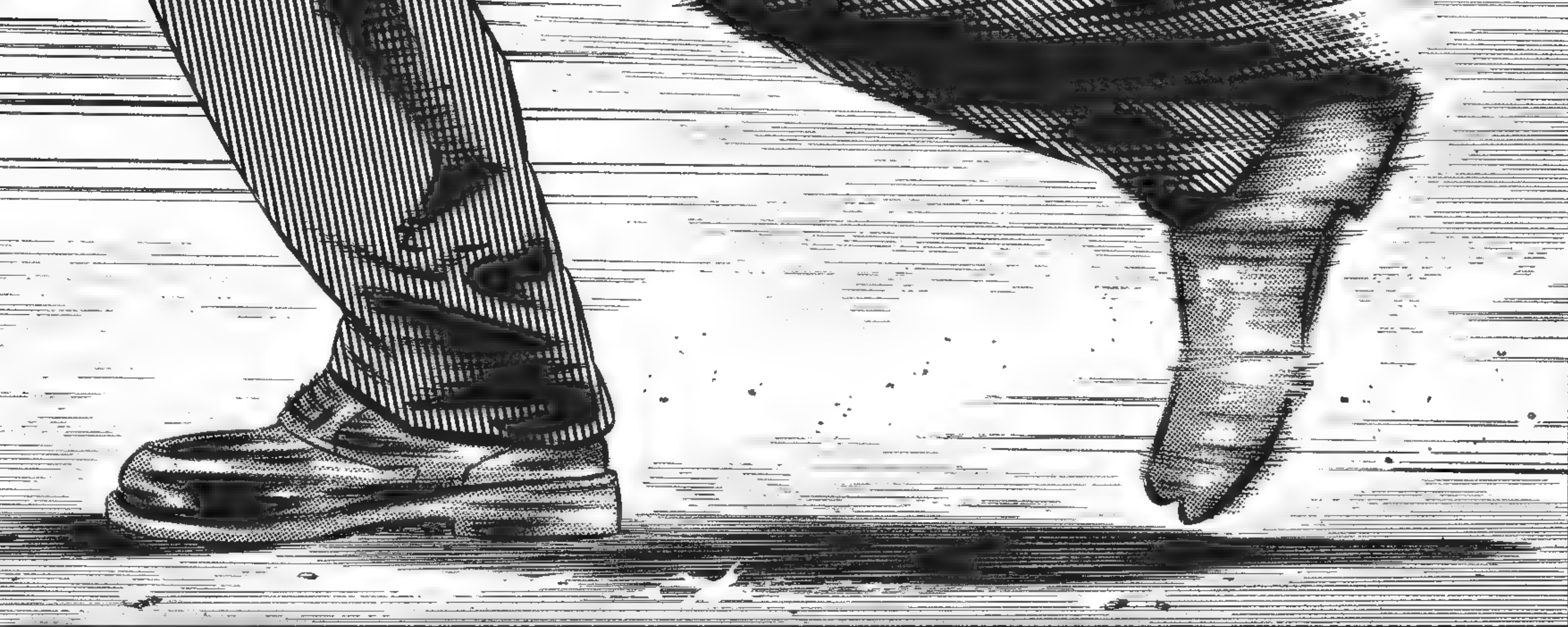








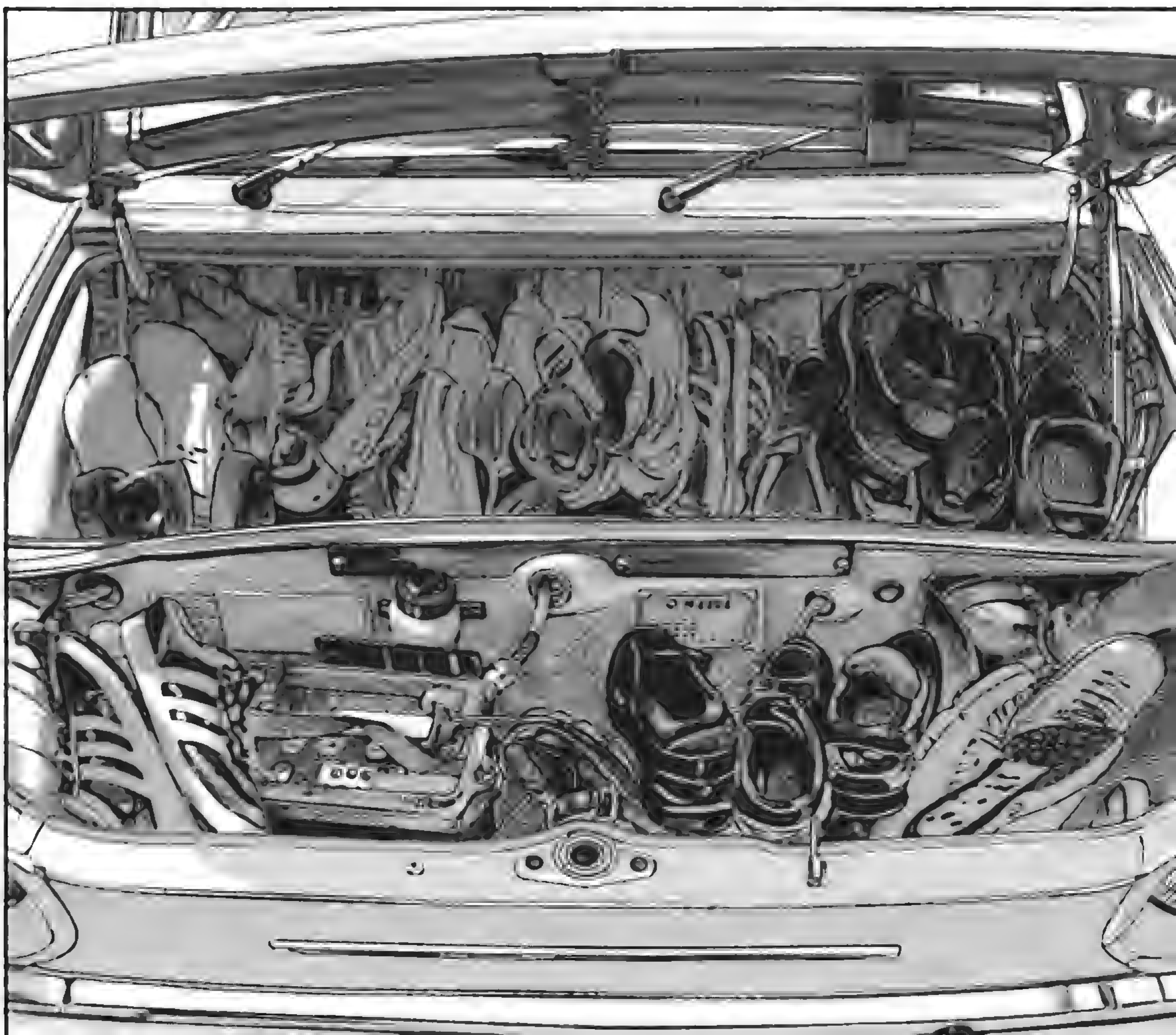








Street: Ticket









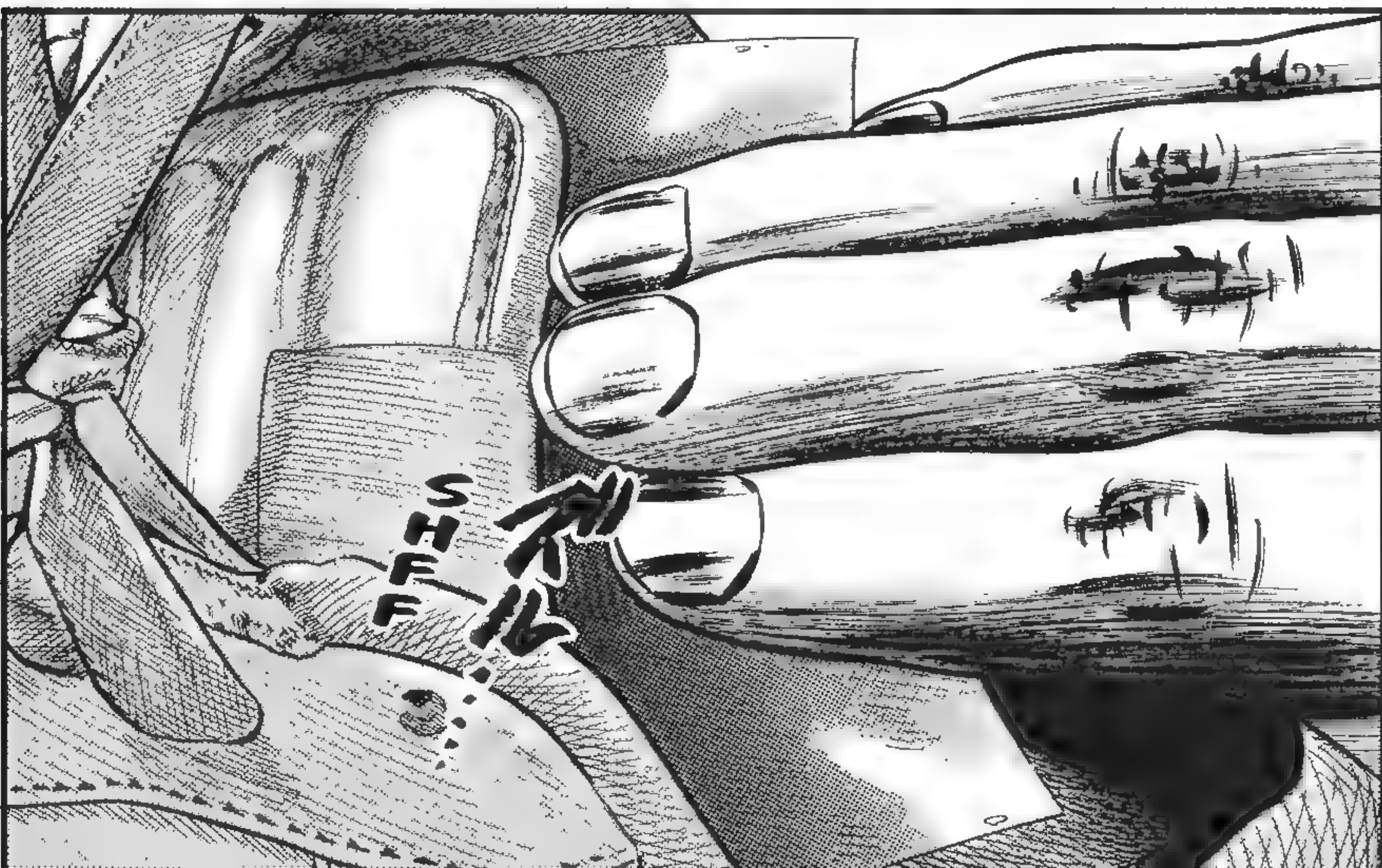
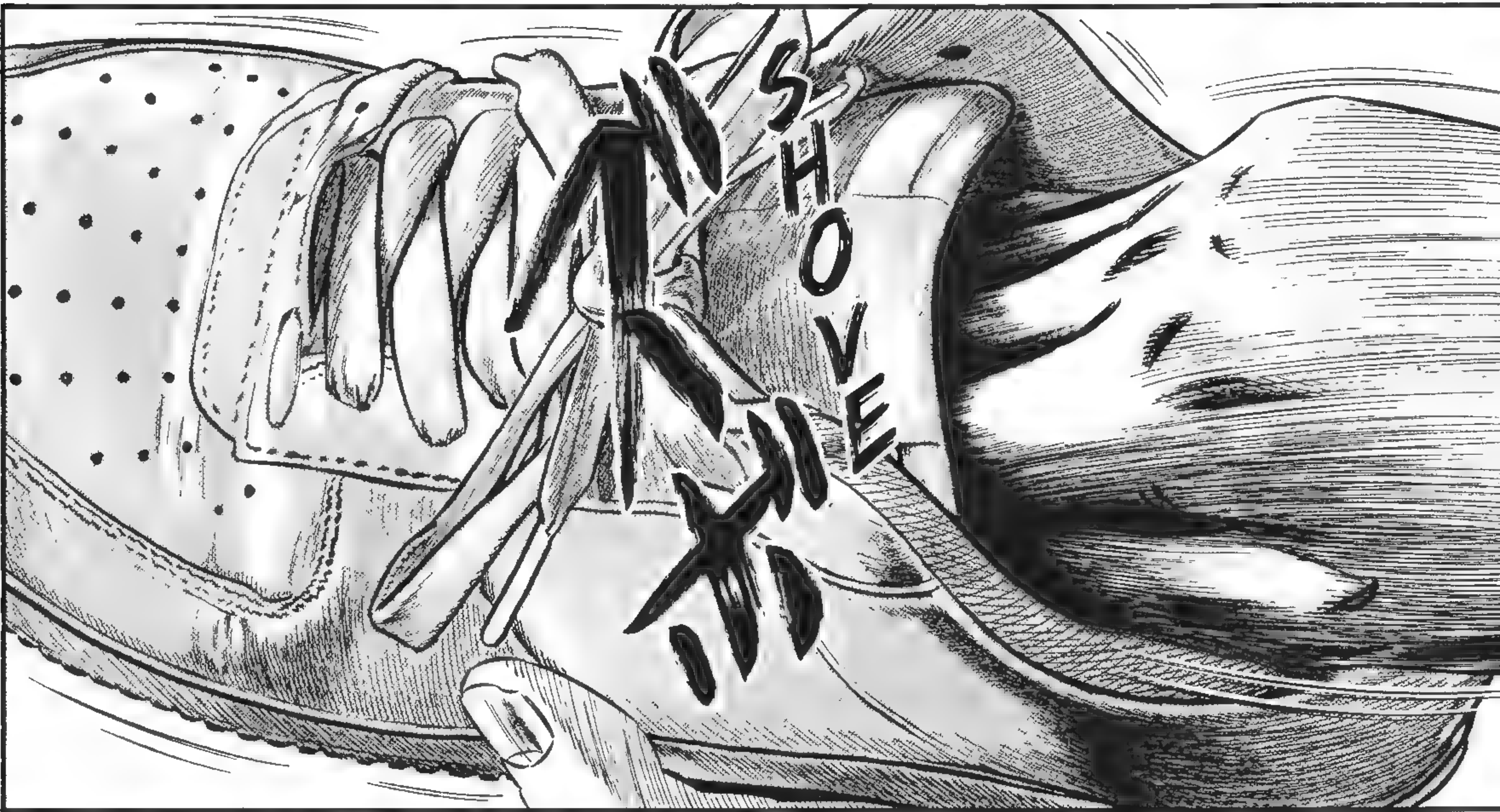
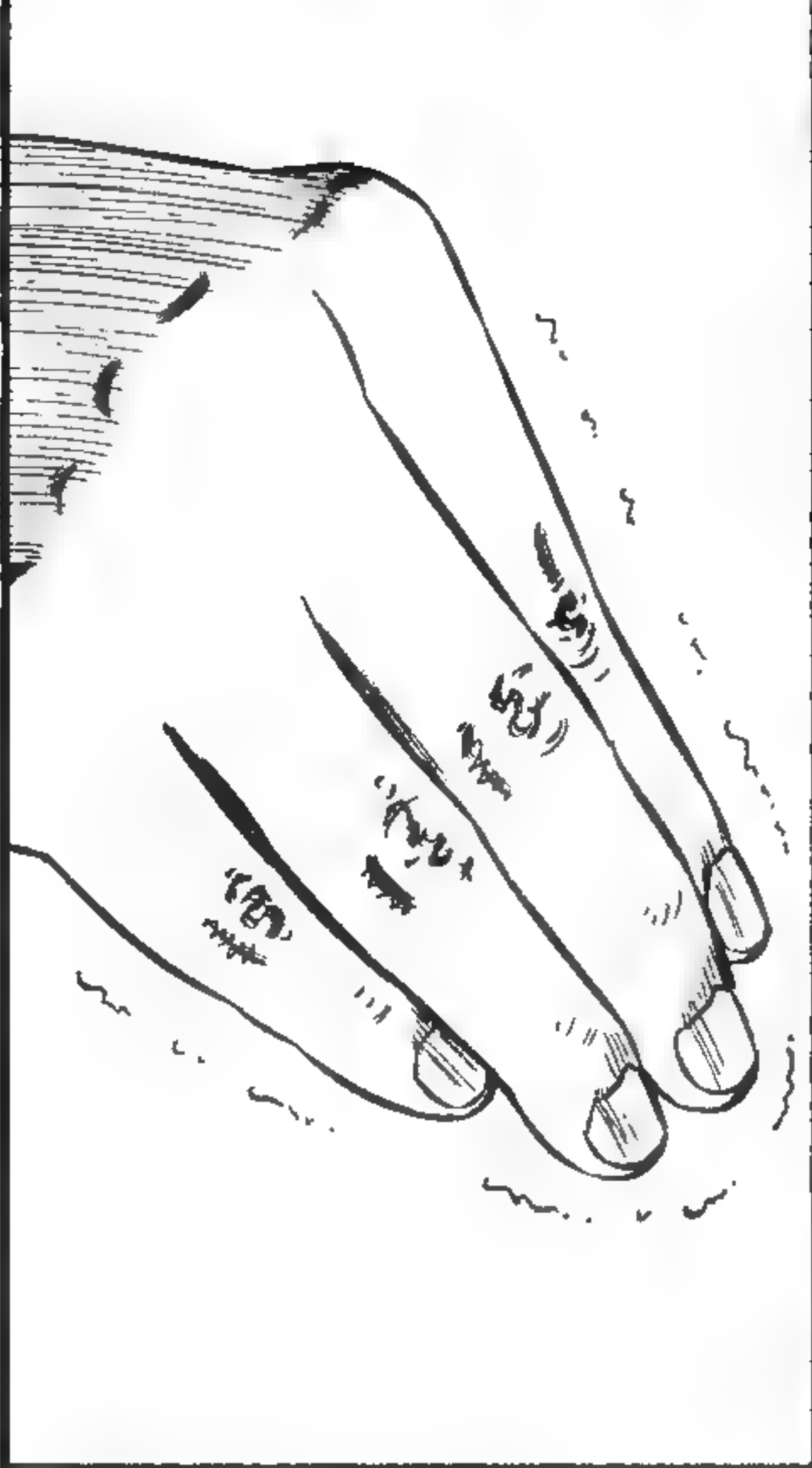




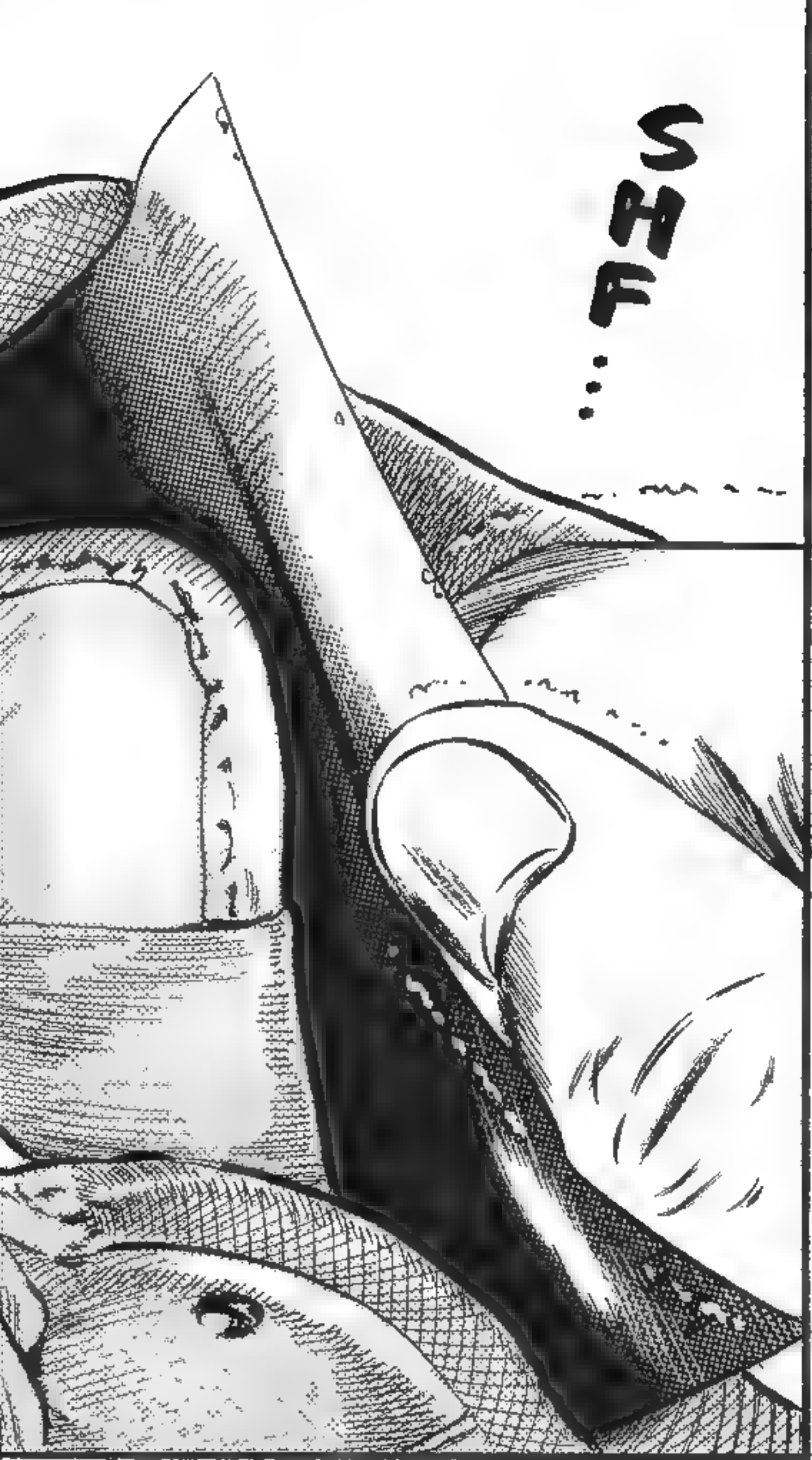
FUCKIN'  
DISGUSTING.



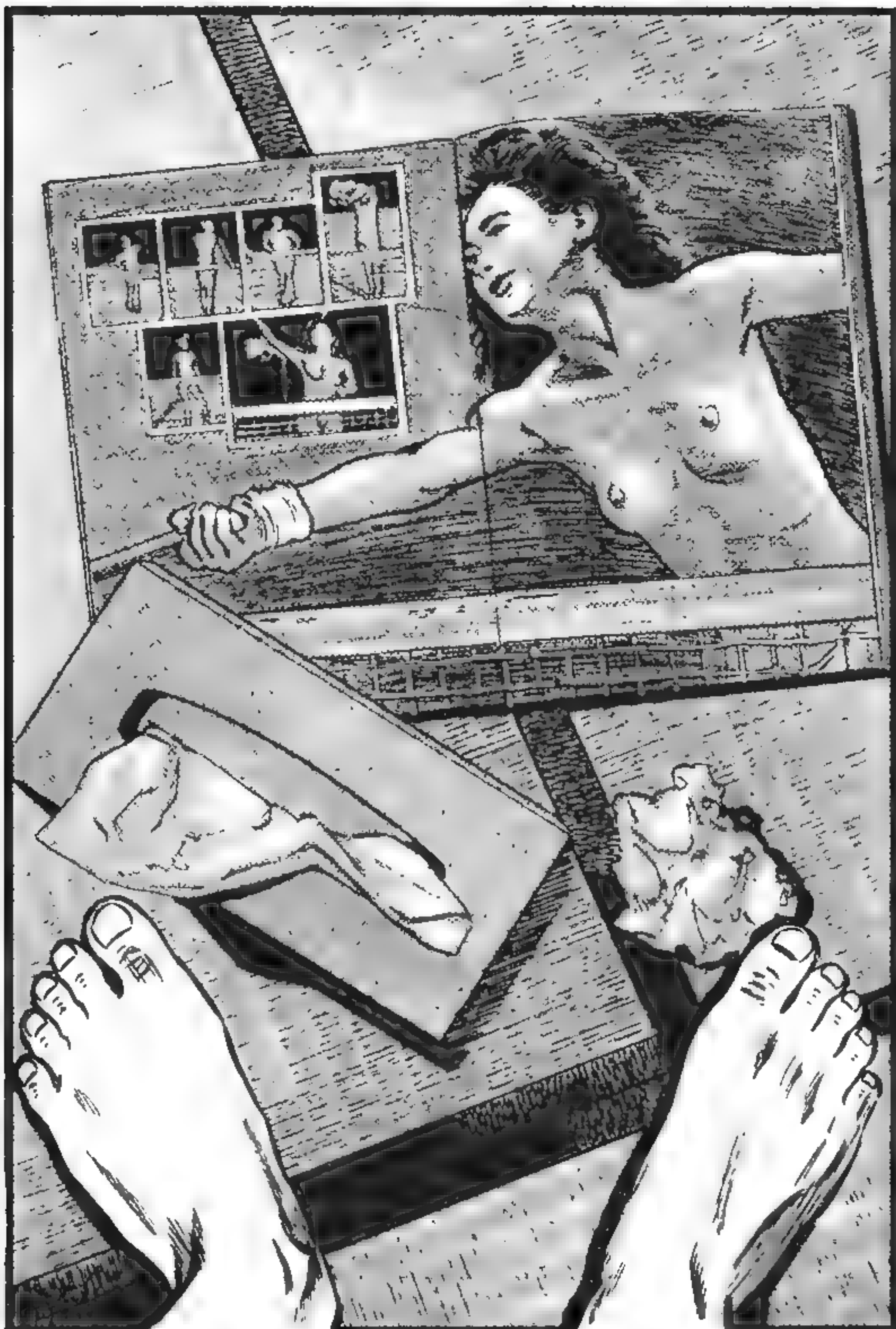




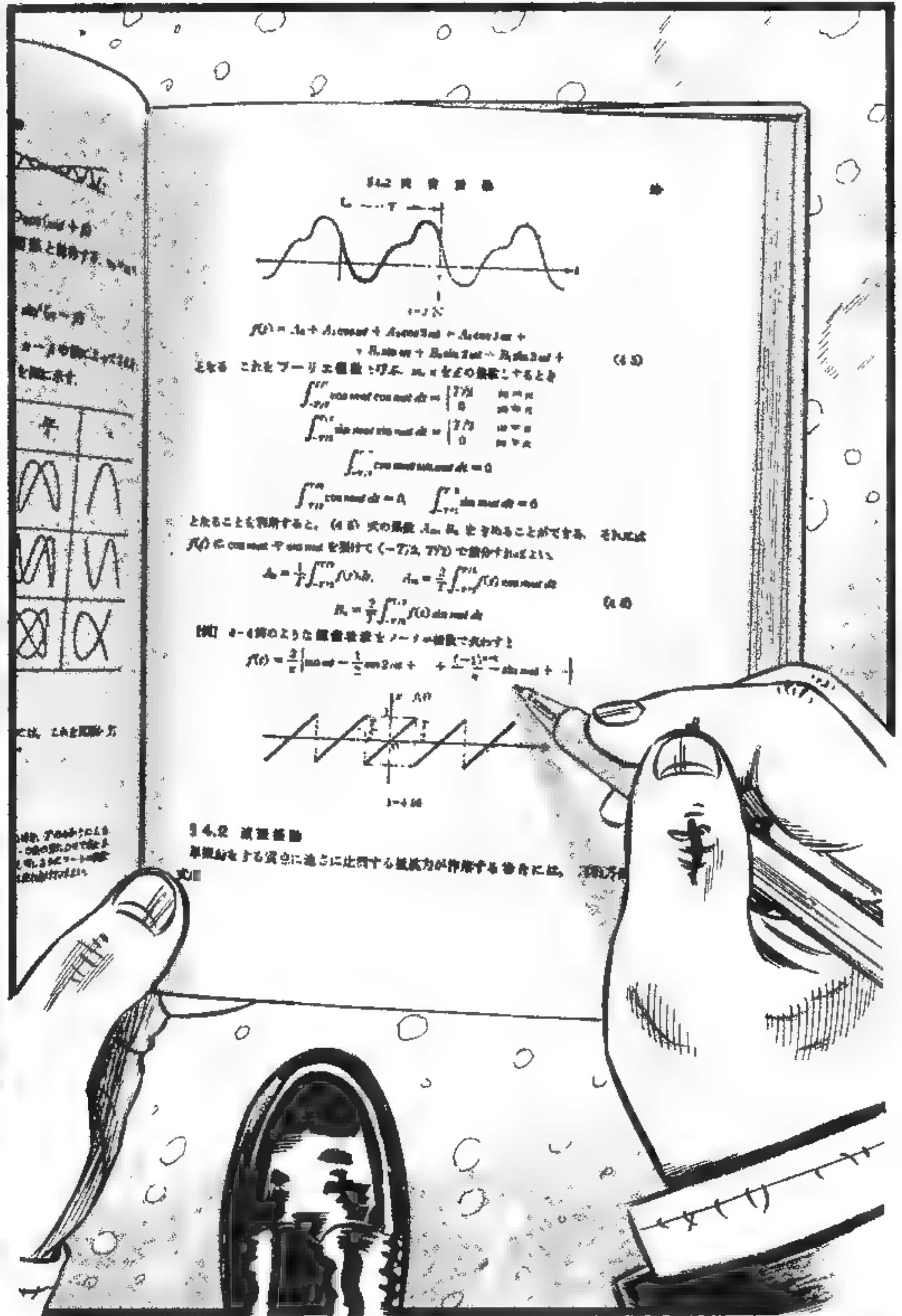








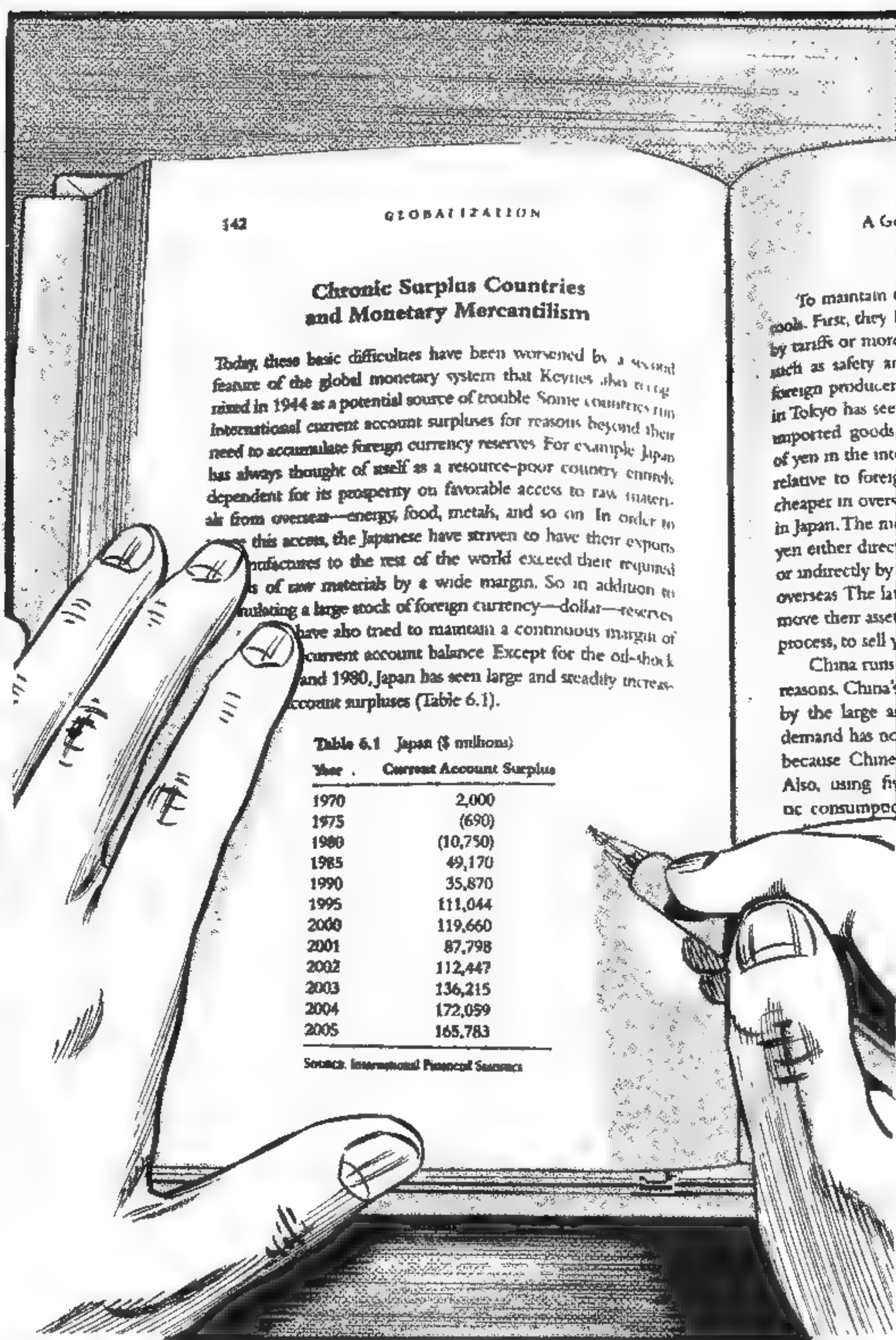
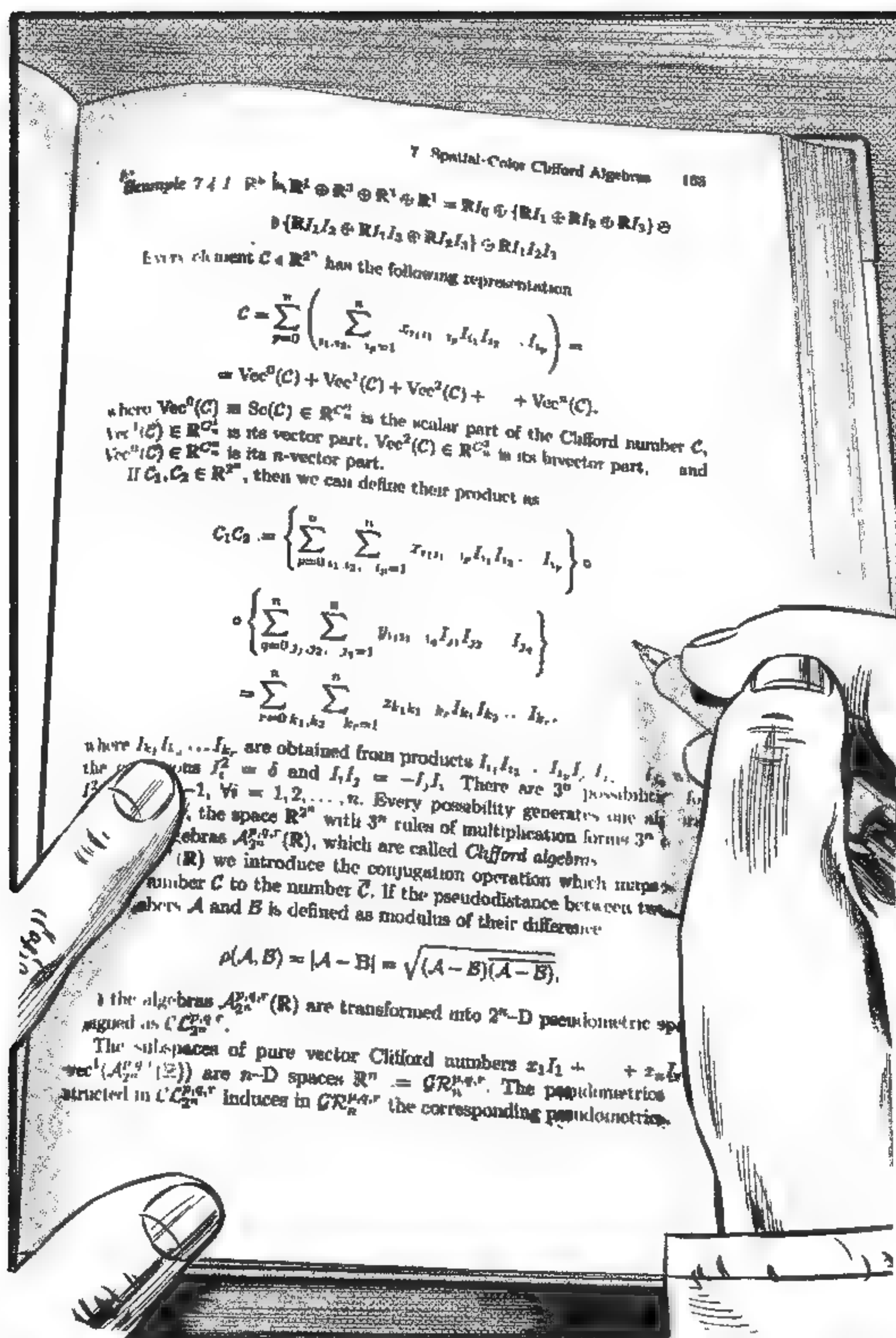












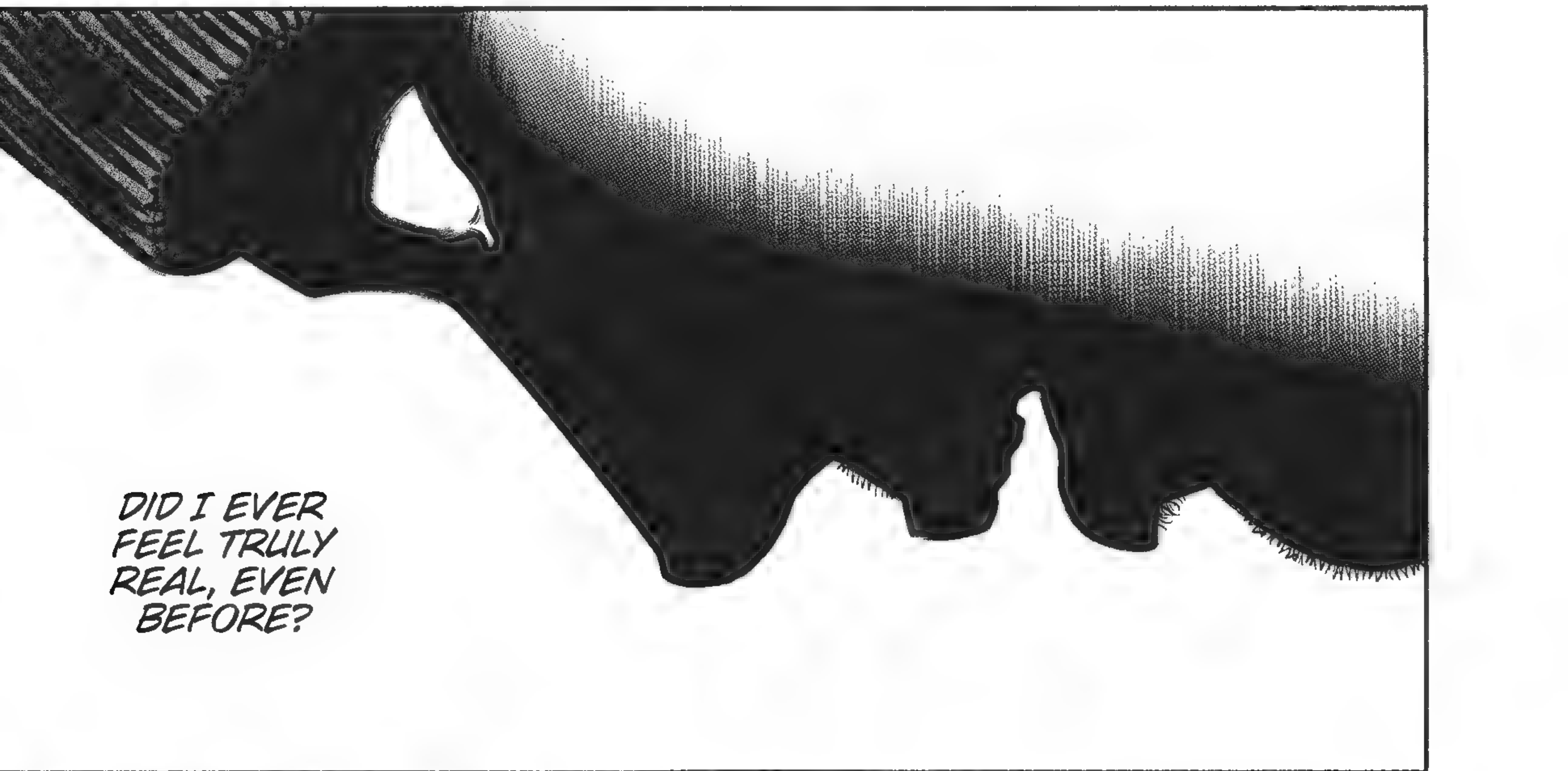








DID  
SOMETHING  
TRAUMATIC  
HAPPEN TO  
MAKE ME  
CHANGE MY  
FACE?



DID I EVER  
FEEL TRULY  
REAL, EVEN  
BEFORE?



WAS  
THE "ME"  
BACK THEN  
CLOSER TO  
MY TRUE  
SELF?



NO.  
THERE'S  
NOTHING  
HERE.











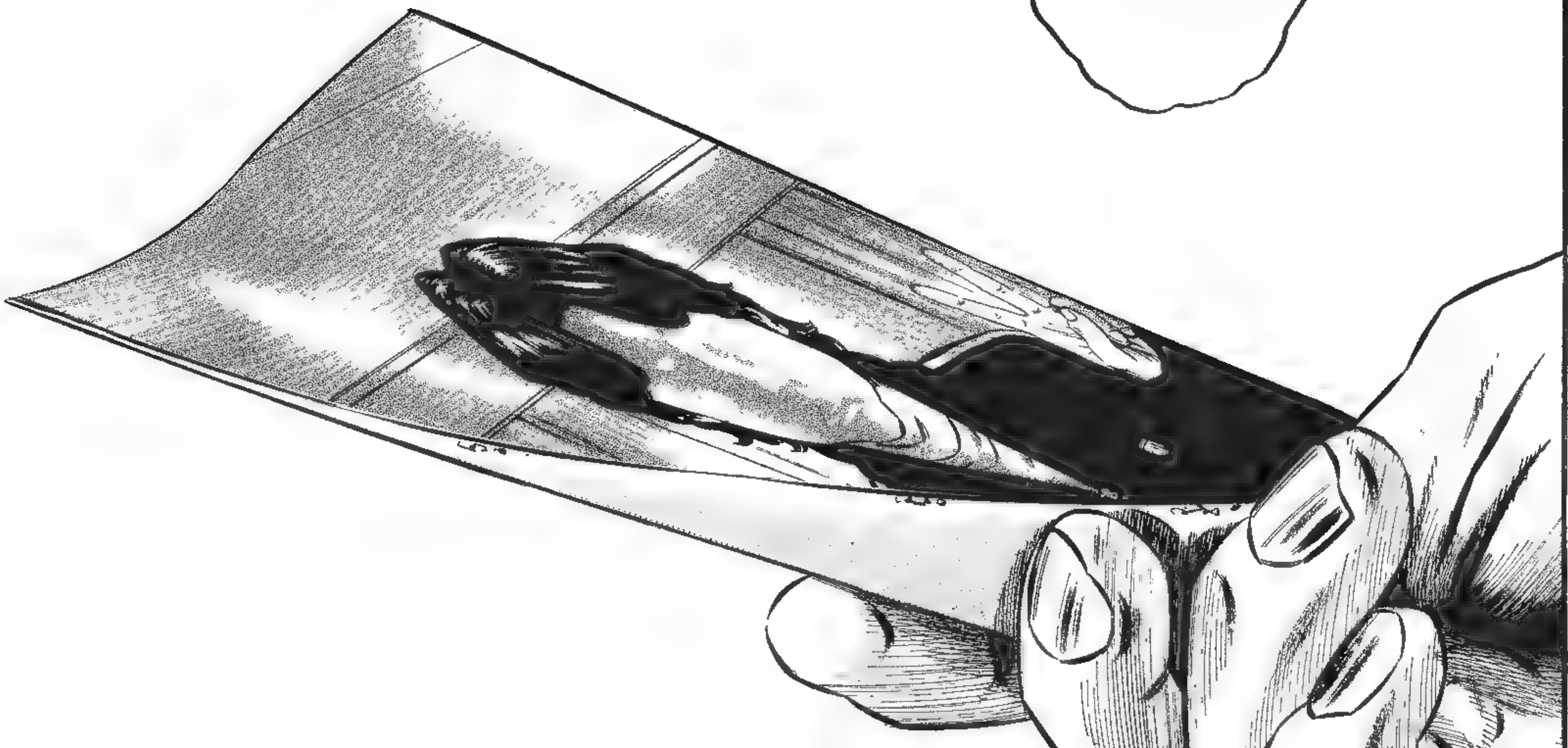
SO  
THAT'S  
IT,  
HUH?





ALL THIS  
TIME, YOU AND  
YOUR LIFE  
WERE JUST...

NOTHING.







NO FAILURES.

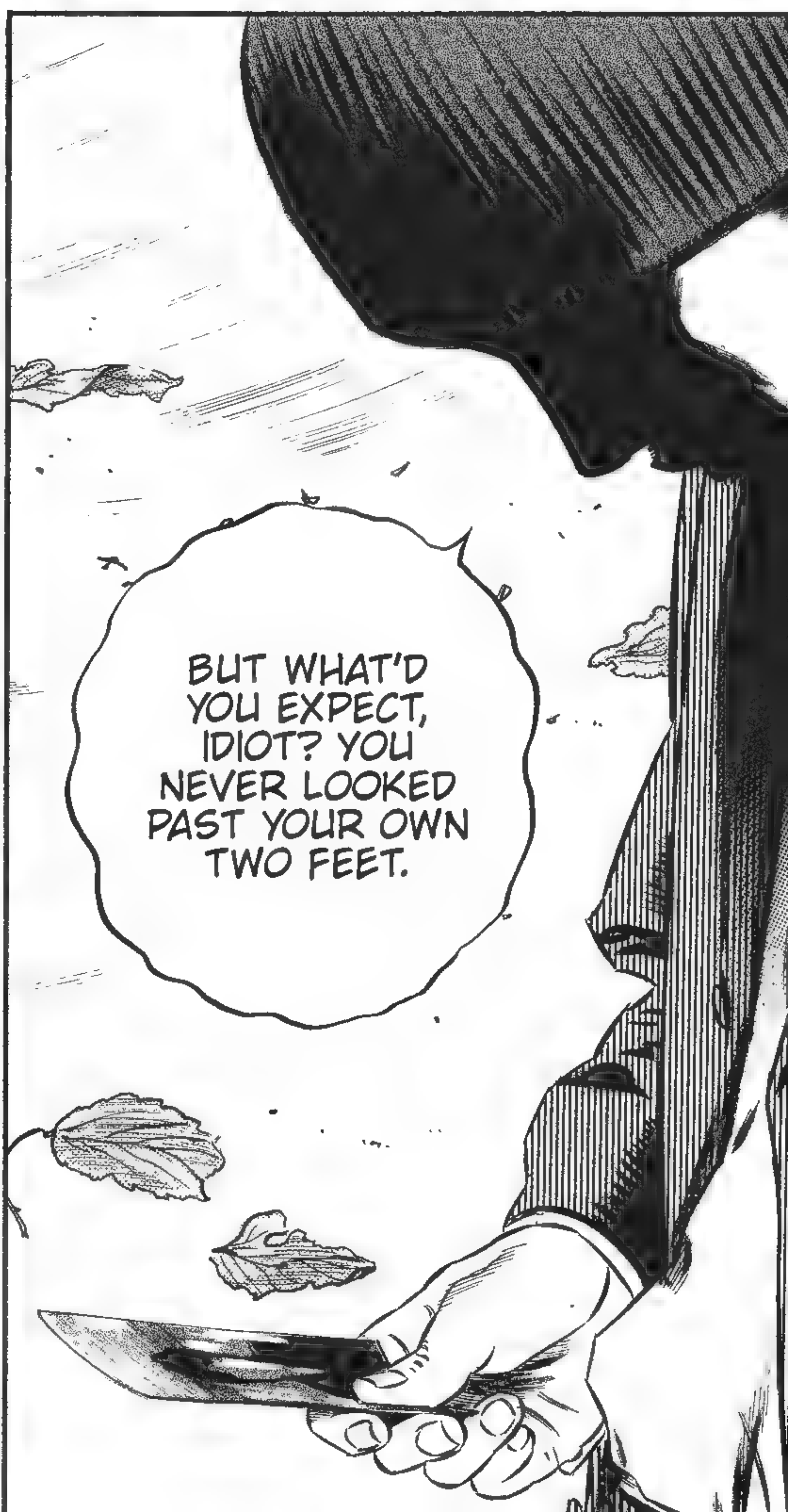
YOU HAD NO TRAUMA.

NO HOPES.

NO JOYS.




THAT'S WHY YOU CHANGED YOUR FACE, ISN'T IT?



BUT WHAT'D YOU EXPECT, IDIOT? YOU NEVER LOOKED PAST YOUR OWN TWO FEET.





SO SURE THAT  
YOUR WORLD  
WAS EMPTY  
BECAUSE OF  
YOUR LOOKS.

YOU WERE  
SO SURE THAT  
A BETTER FACE  
WOULD MAKE  
YOU COMPLETE.

BUT  
LOOK AT US  
NOW. LOOK  
AT ME.

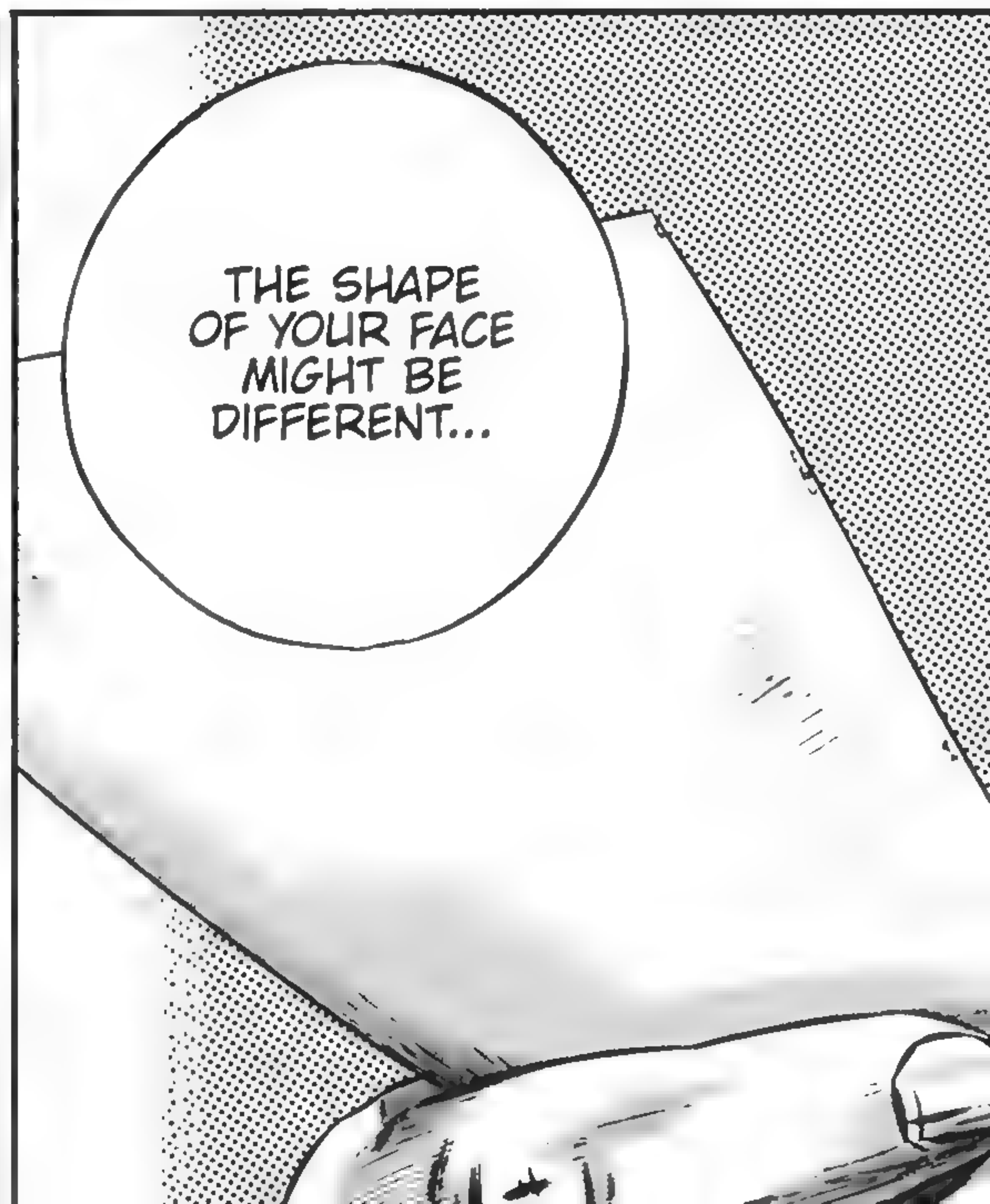




NOTHING  
CHANGED  
AT ALL,  
DID IT?



BUT WE'VE  
BOTH GOT  
THE SAME  
EXPRESSION,  
DON'T WE?



THE SHAPE  
OF YOUR FACE  
MIGHT BE  
DIFFERENT...





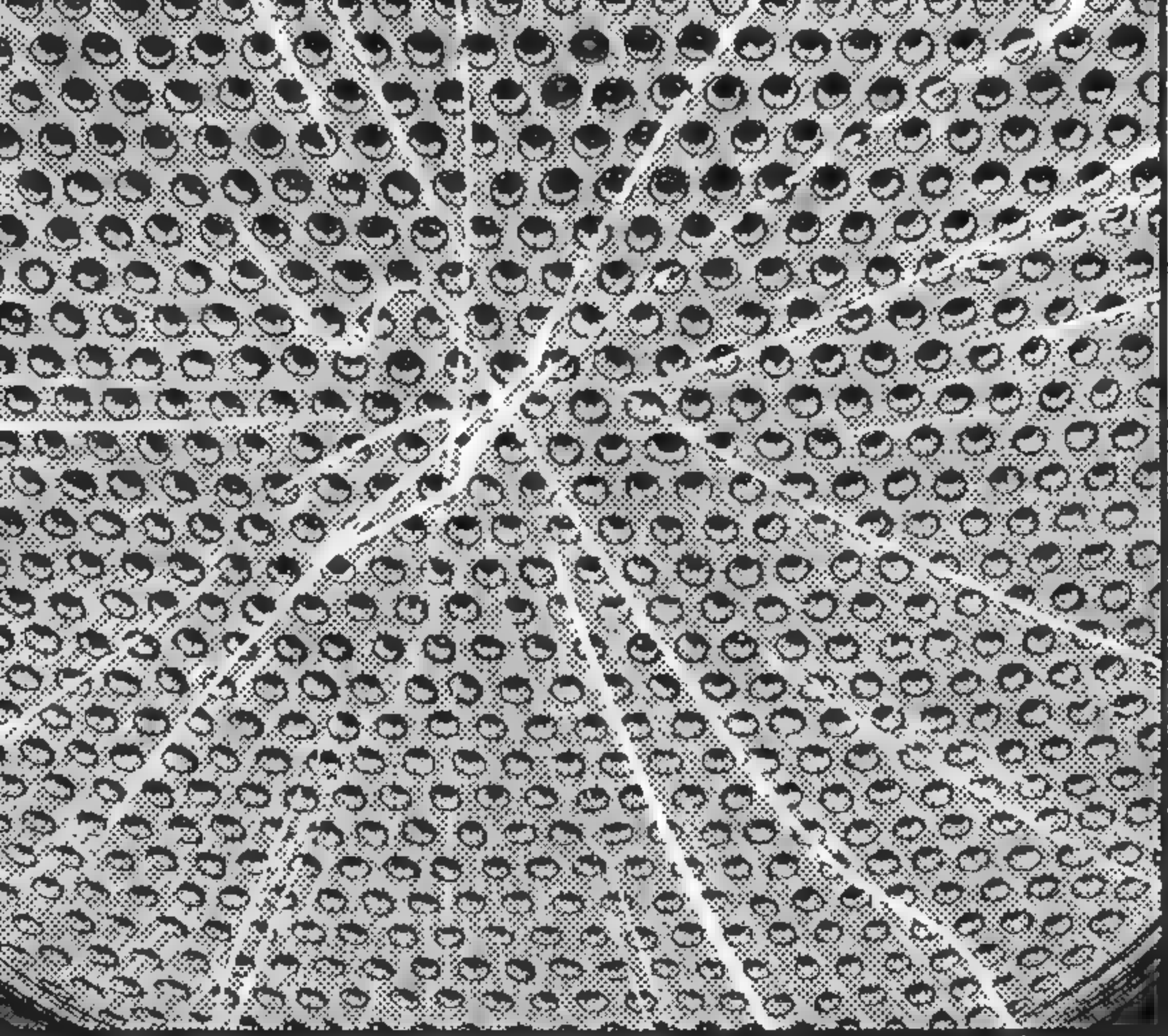
I THINK, ON  
SOME LEVEL,  
I KNEW ALL  
ALONG...

THAT I'VE  
NEVER REALLY  
CHANGED.  
NOT WHERE  
I SHOULD.













LOOK  
AT  
ME!





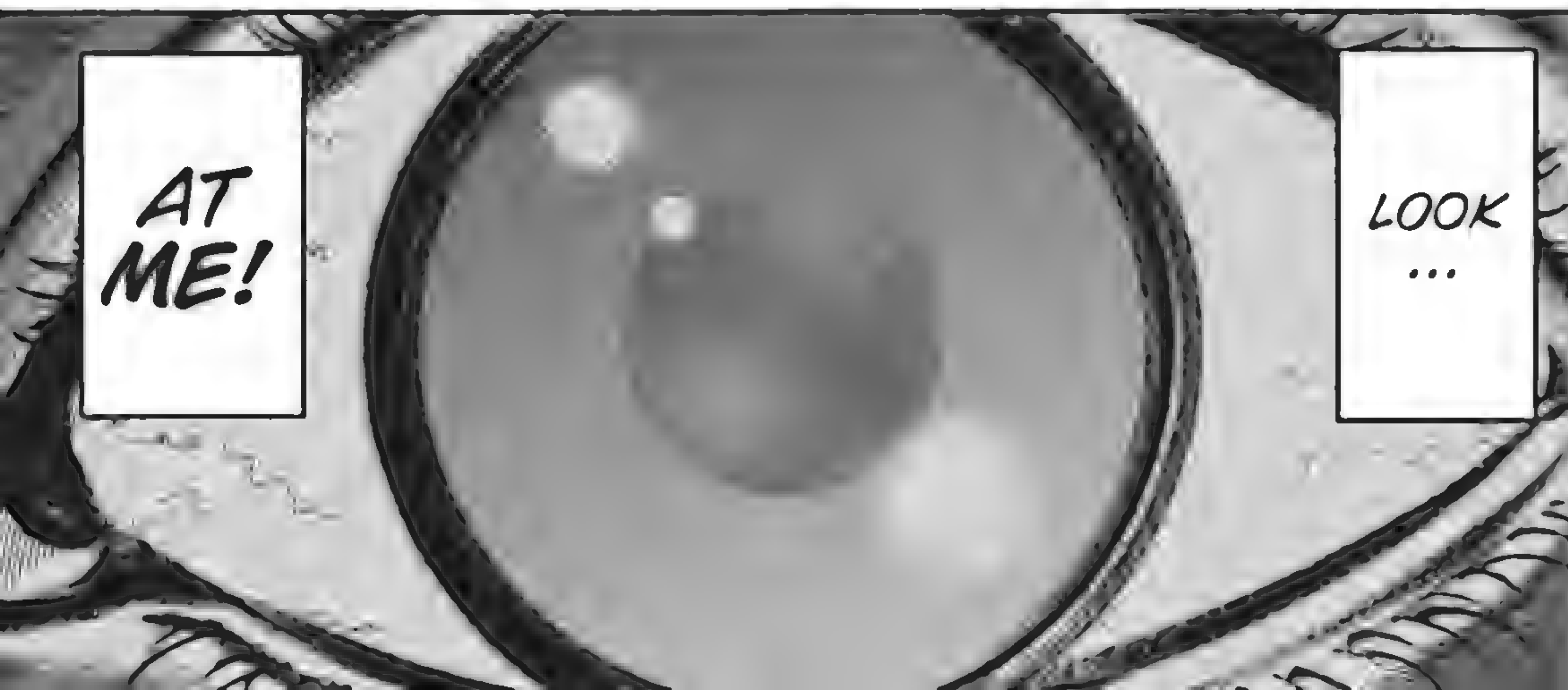




NOT  
IN MY  
MONEY  
...



OR  
MY  
CAR.



AT  
ME!

LOOK  
...






*I AM  
HERE!  
I AM  
REAL!*






*I...*



**AM  
NOT  
INVIS-  
IBLE!**



*I...*



**AM  
NOT  
FACE-  
LESS!**



*I...*



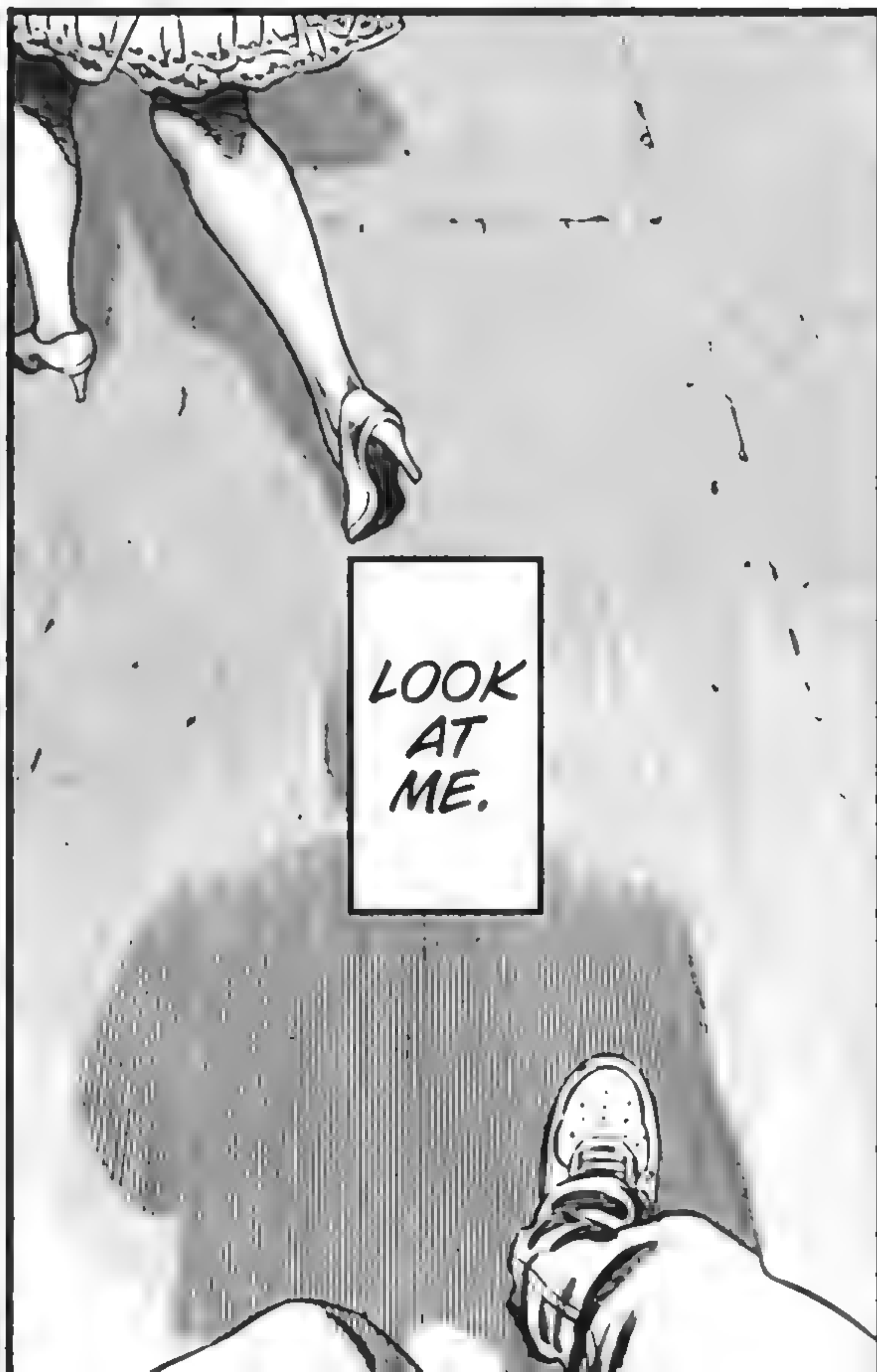
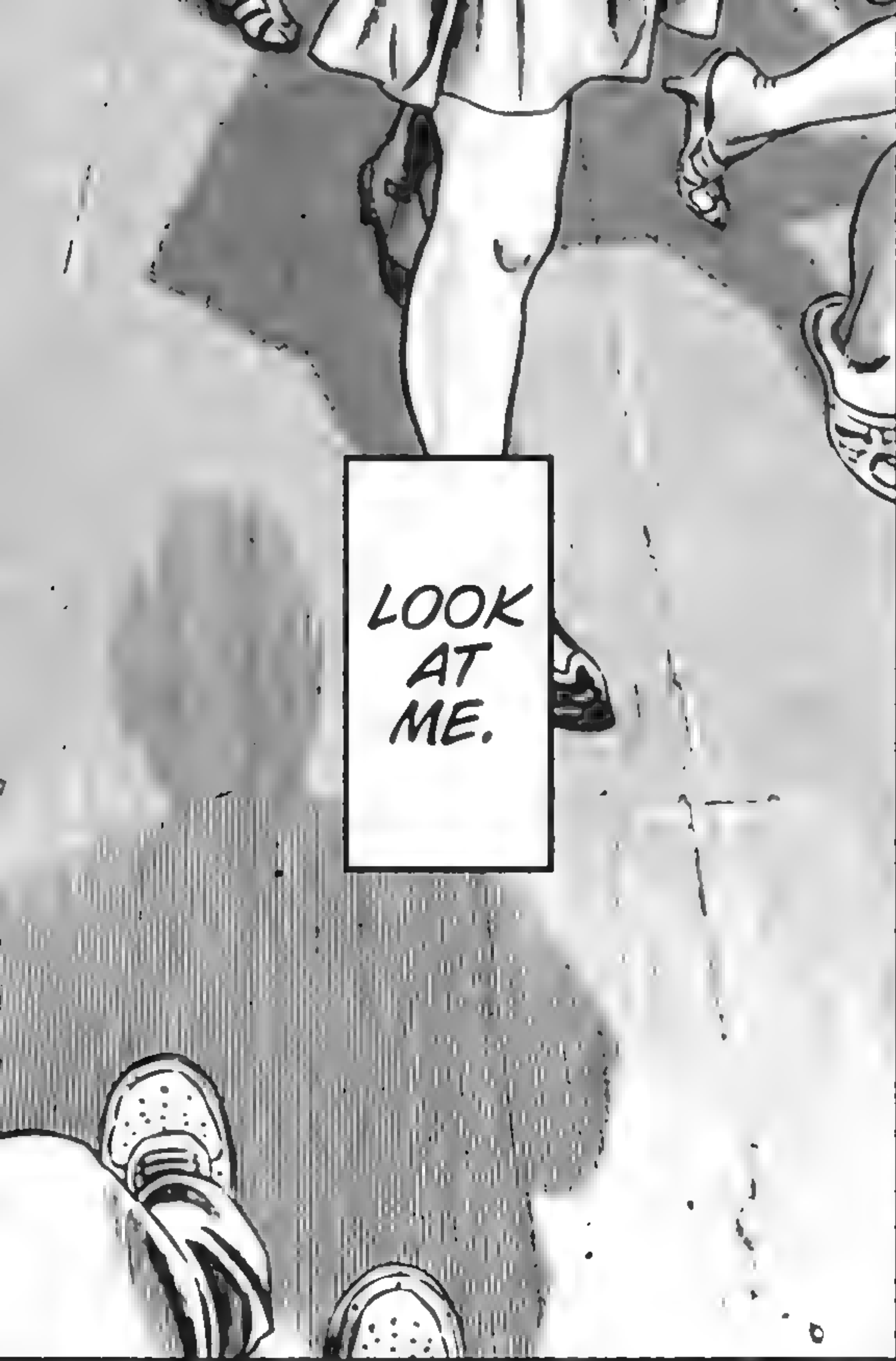
**AM  
NOT A  
ZERO!**



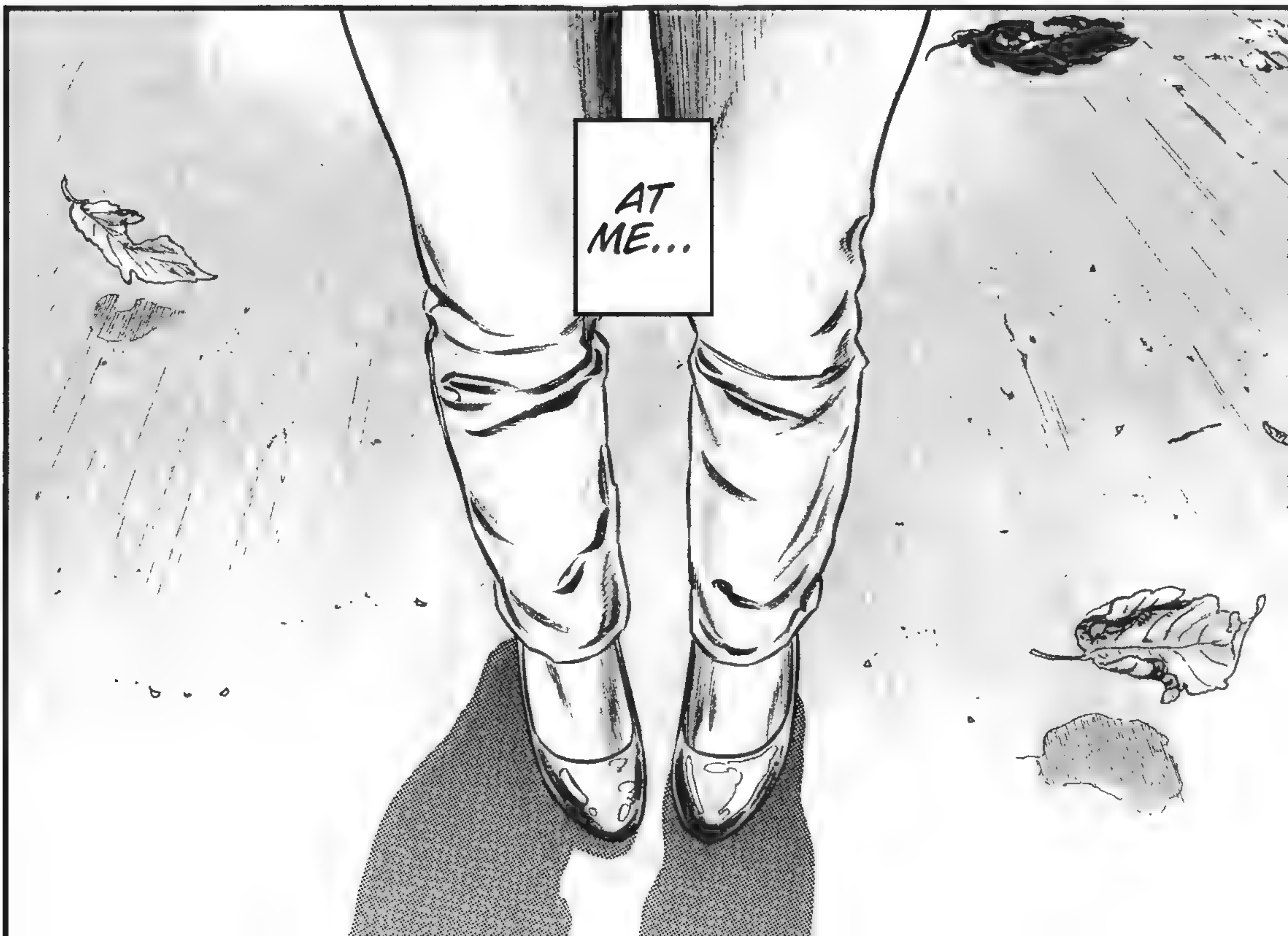


LOOK  
AT  
ME!!







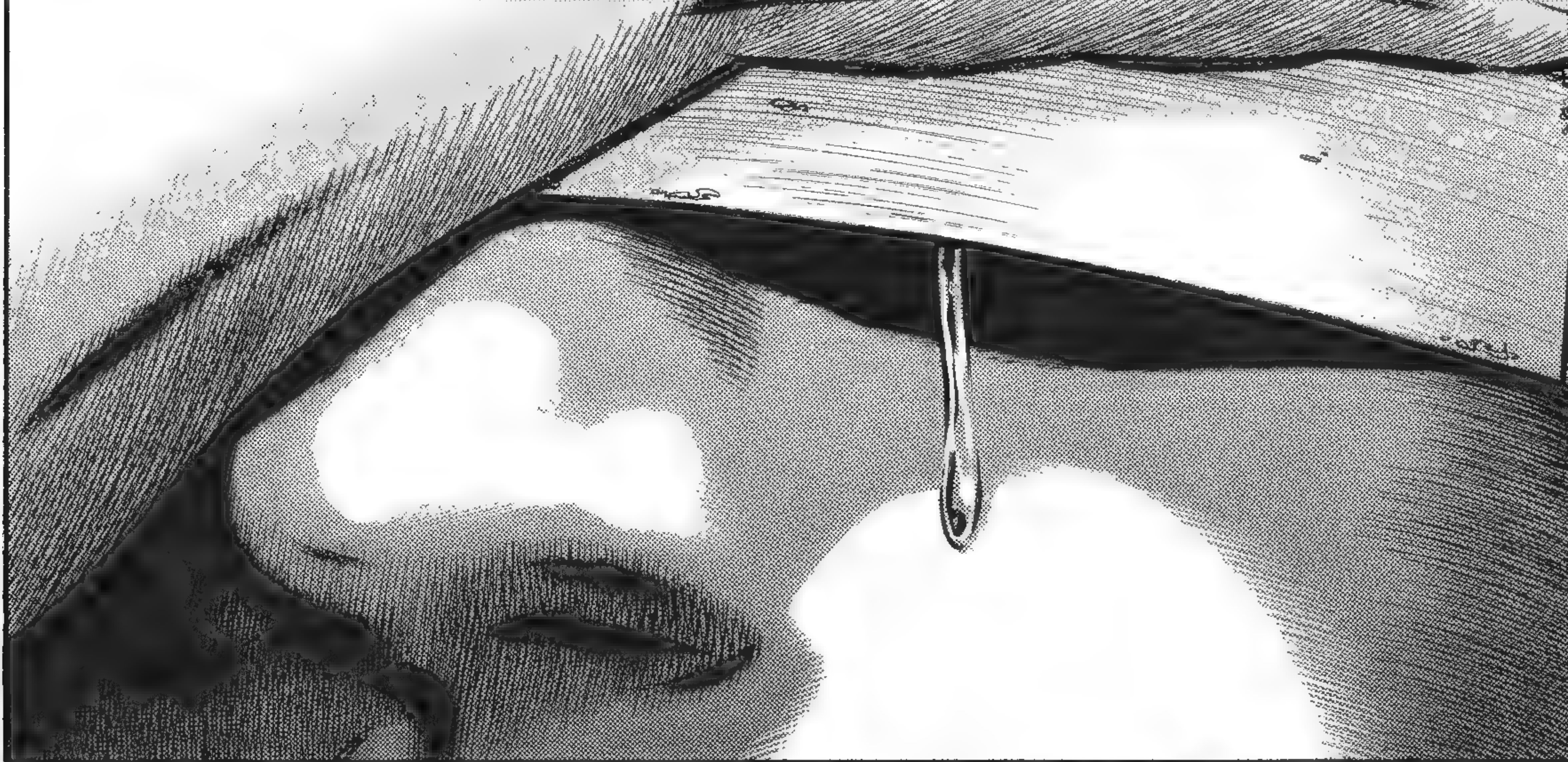




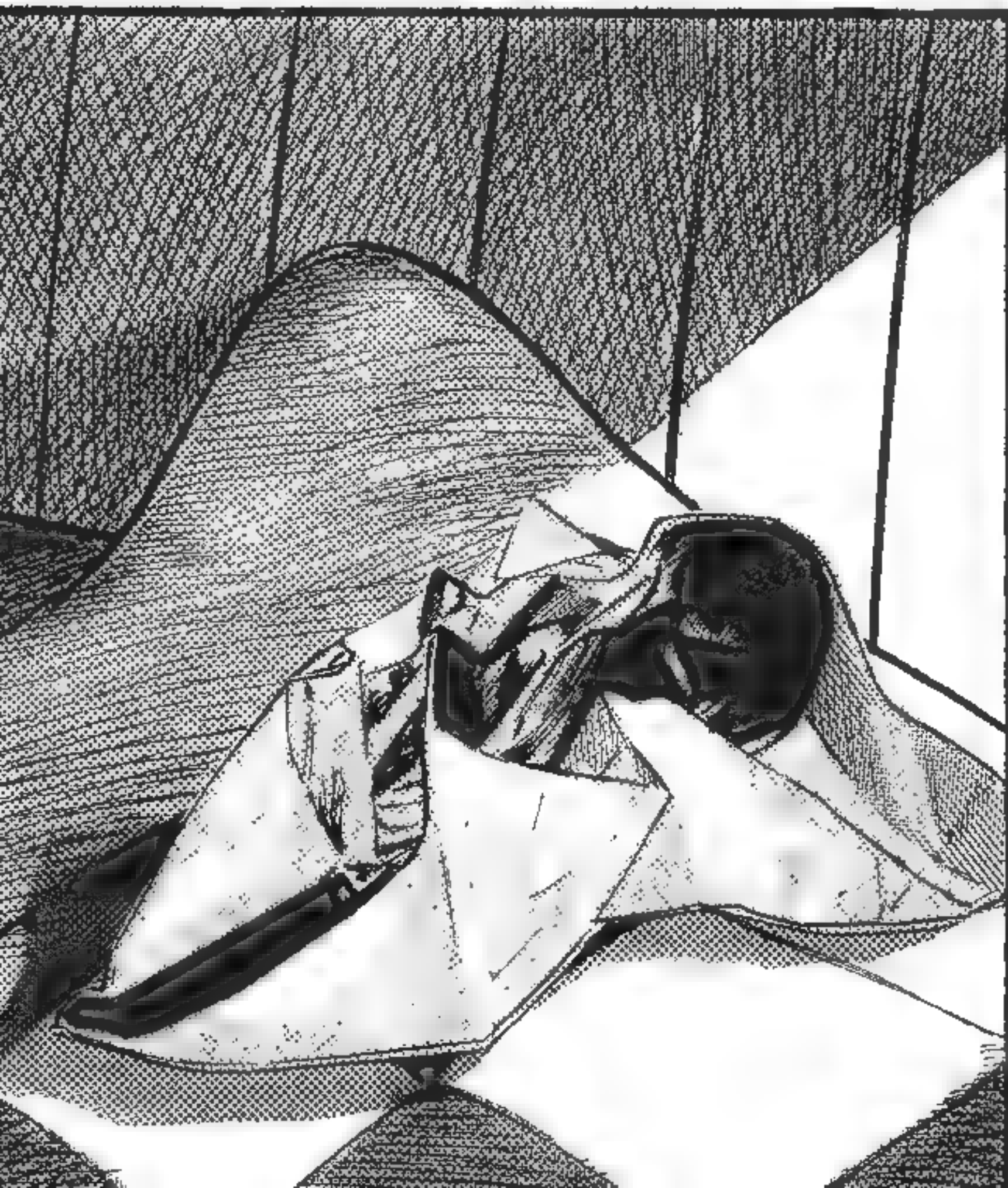
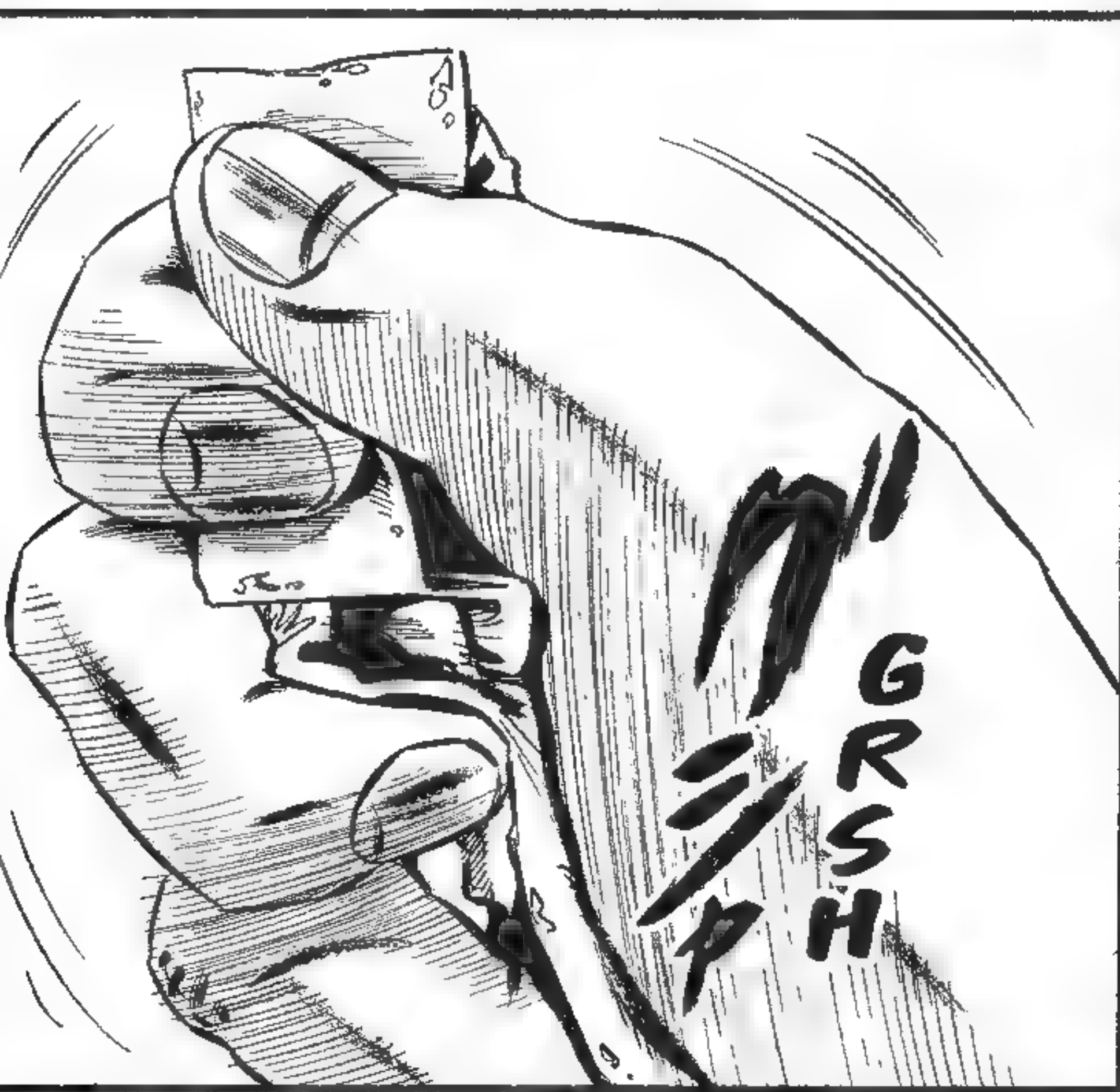


*PLEASE...*









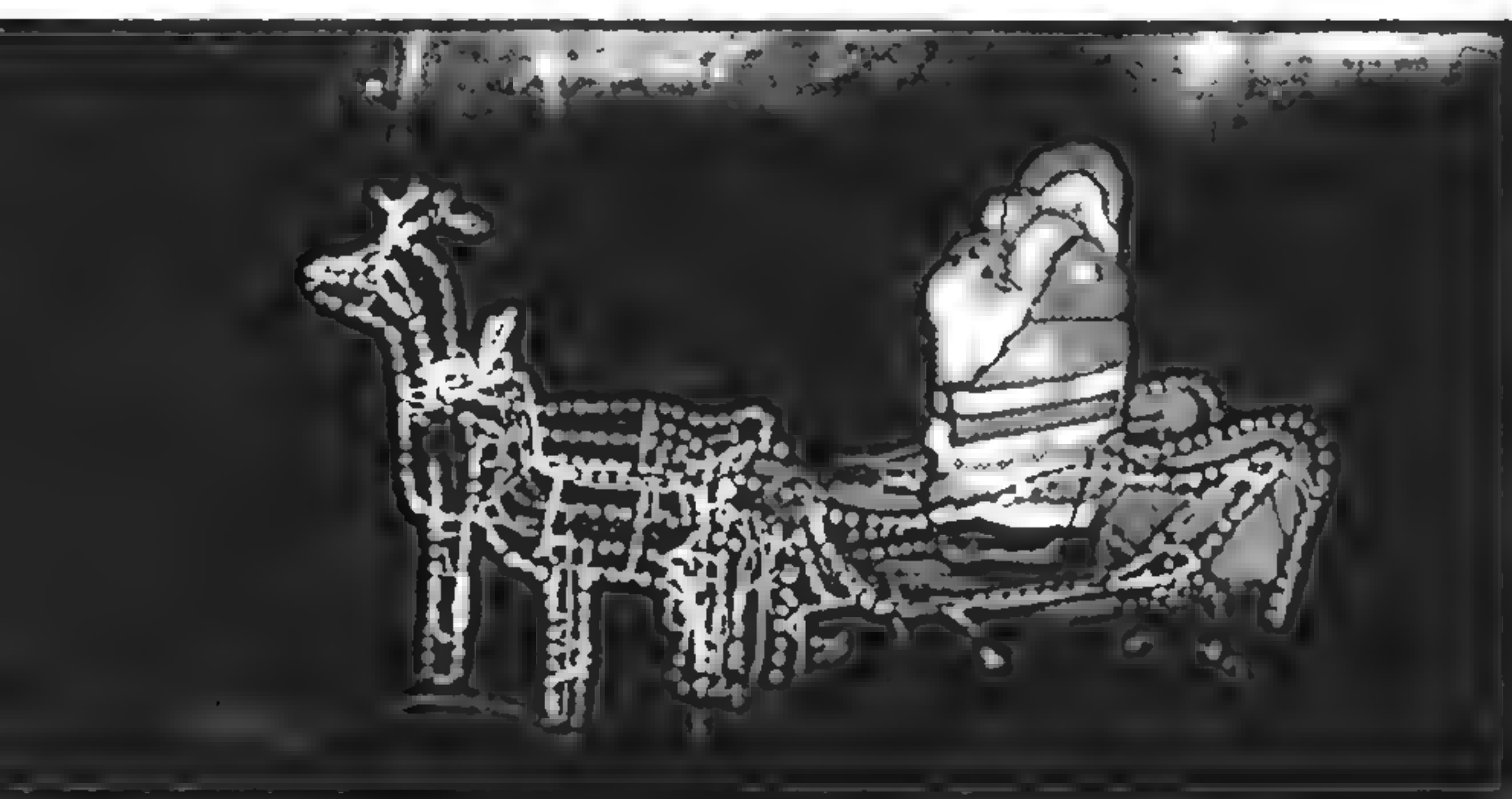




THERE  
WAS  
SOME-  
ONE...

WHO  
SAW  
ME.







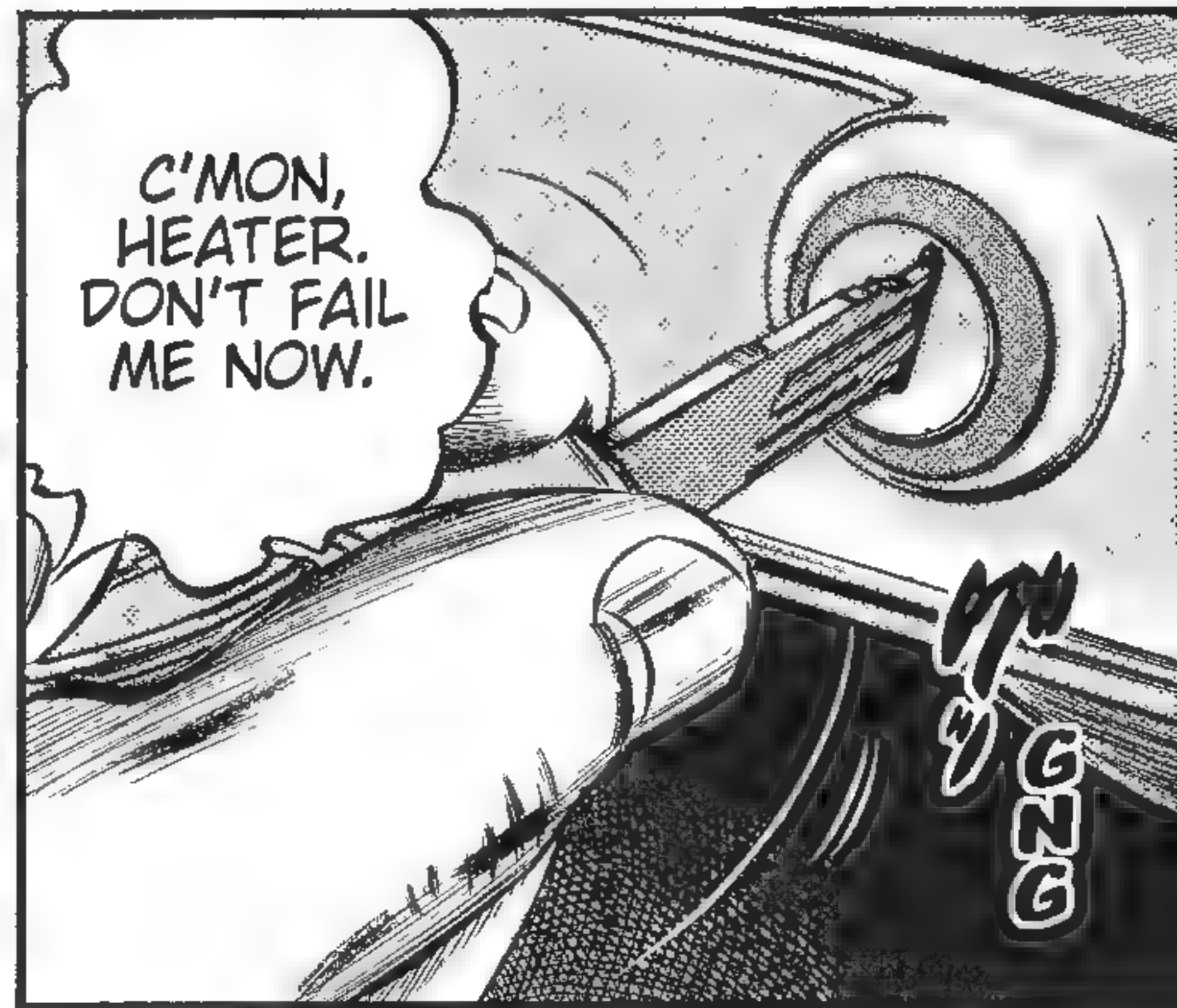
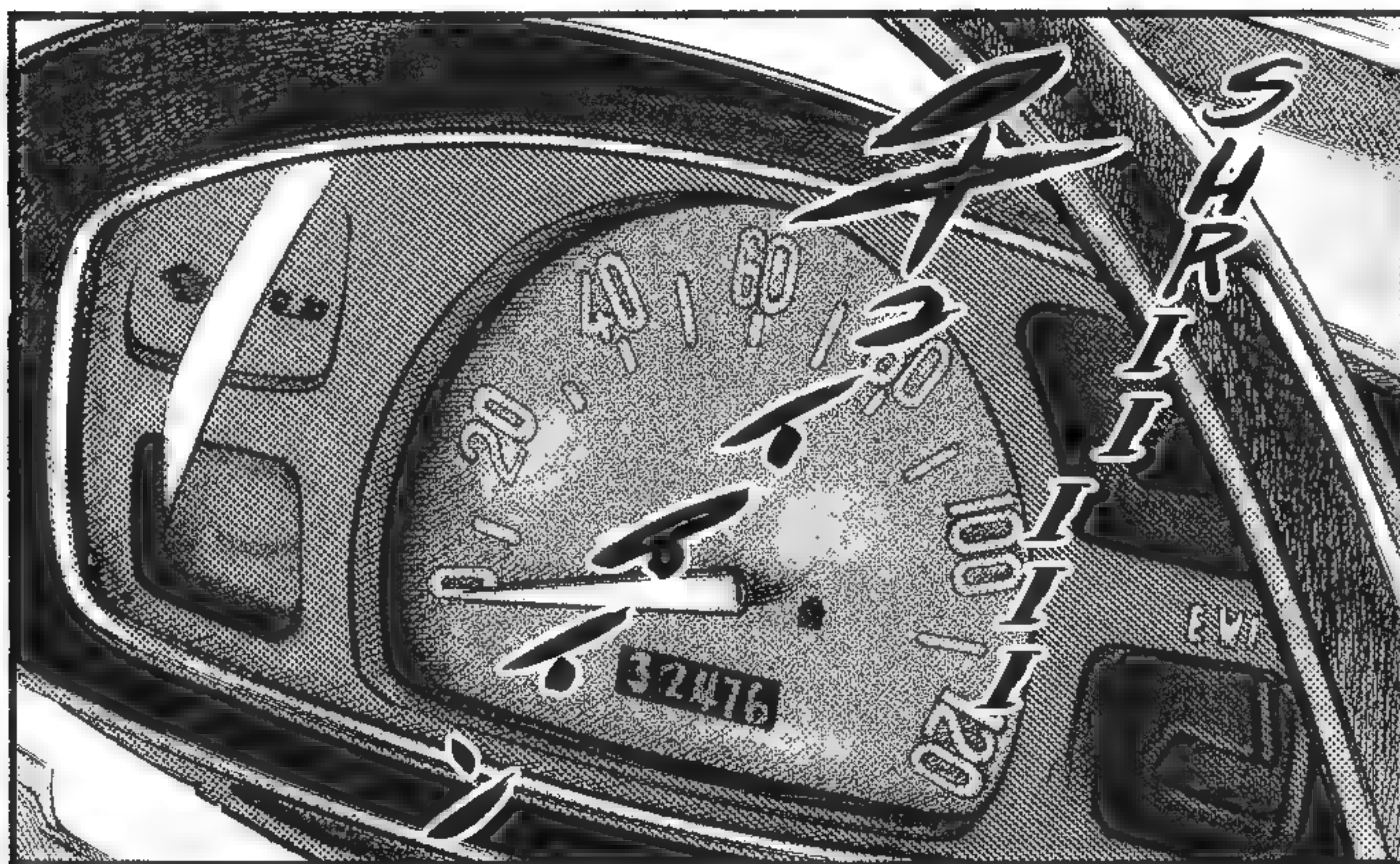


I DIDN'T  
EVEN  
NOTICE.

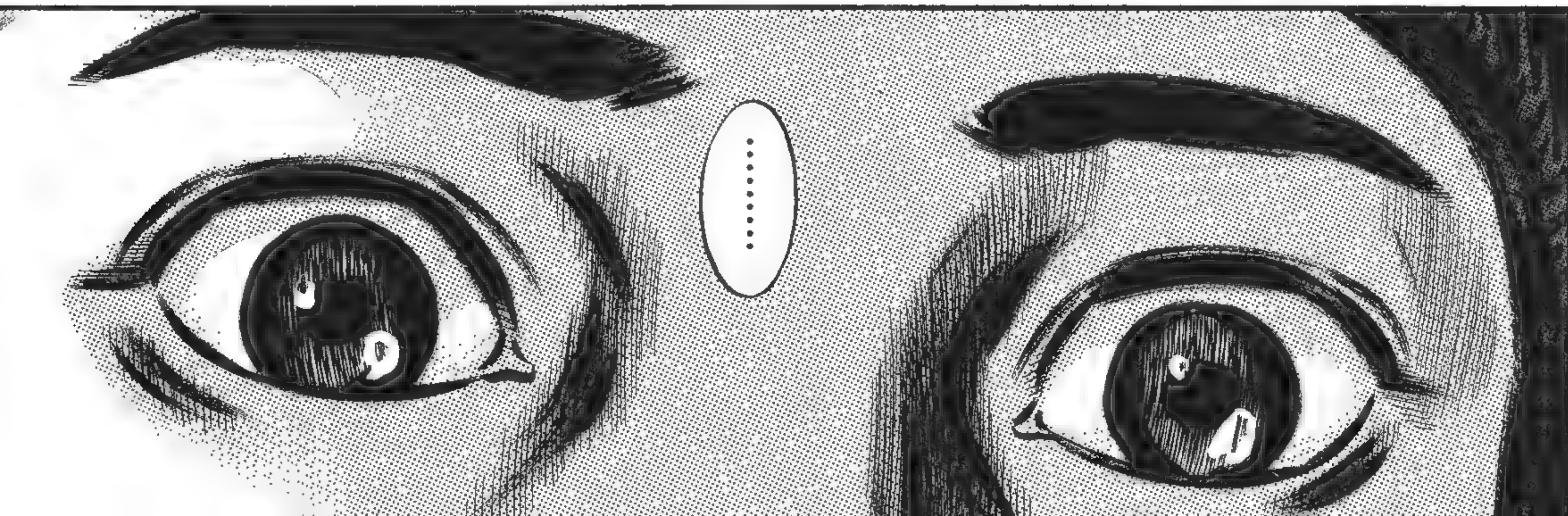
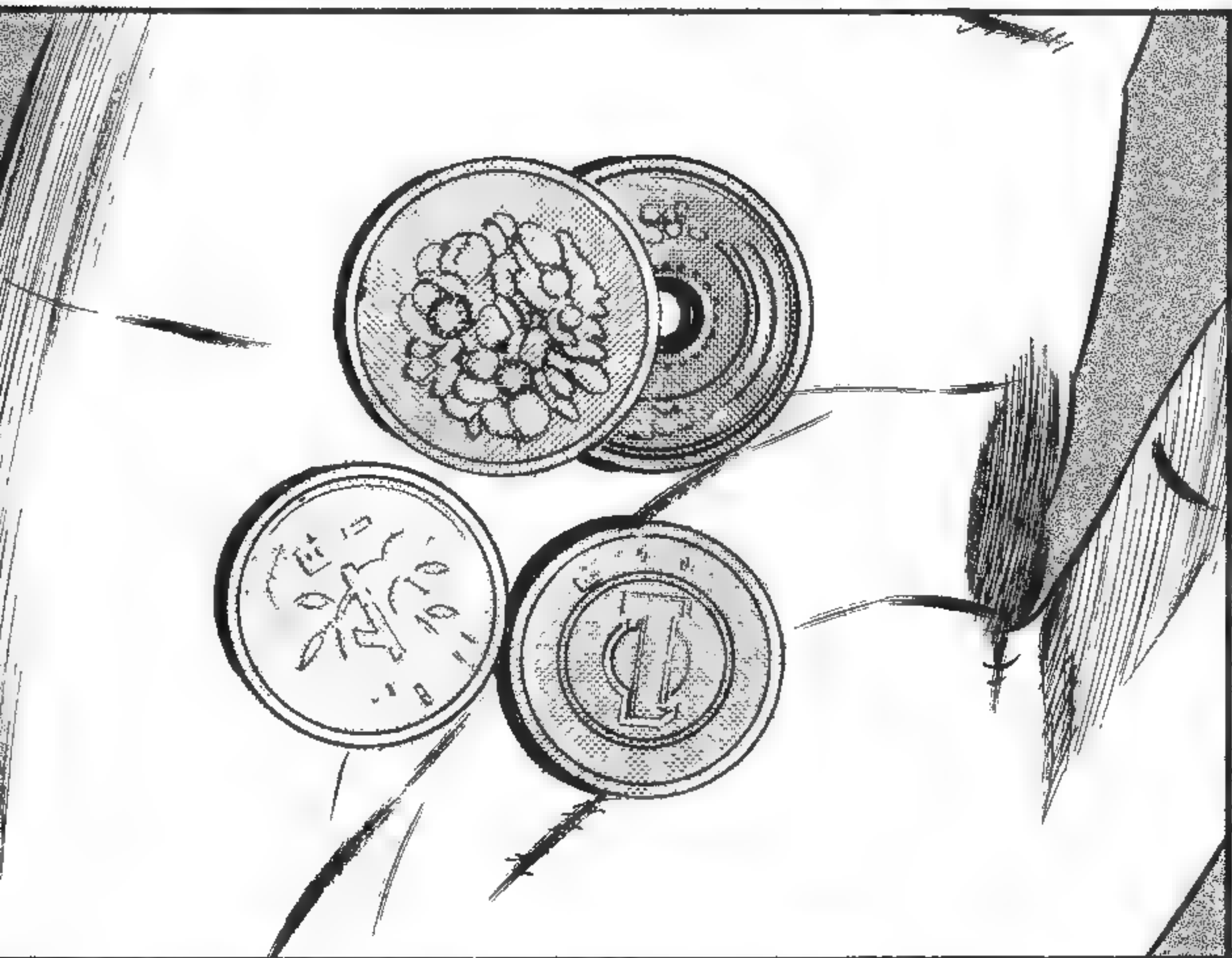
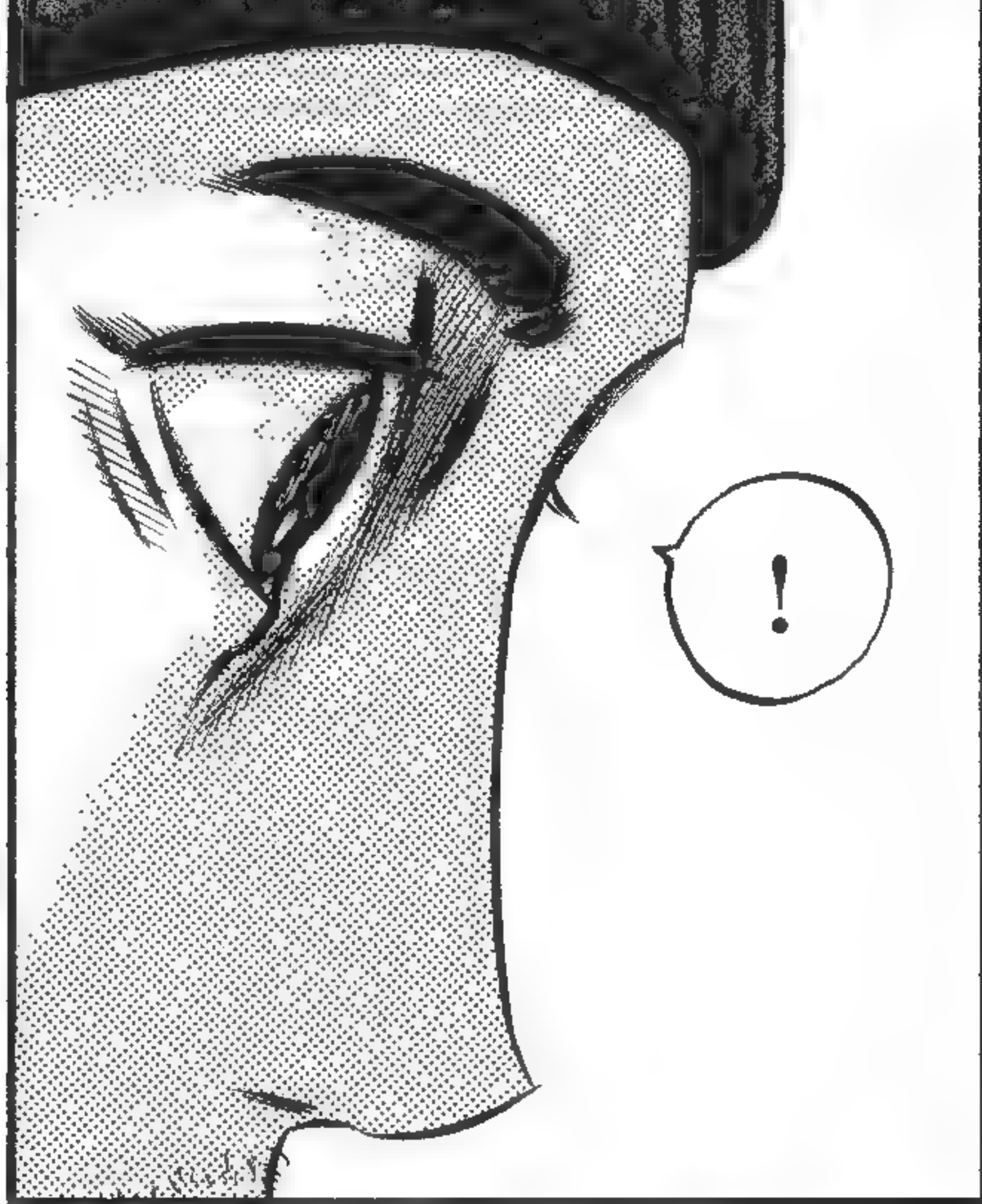




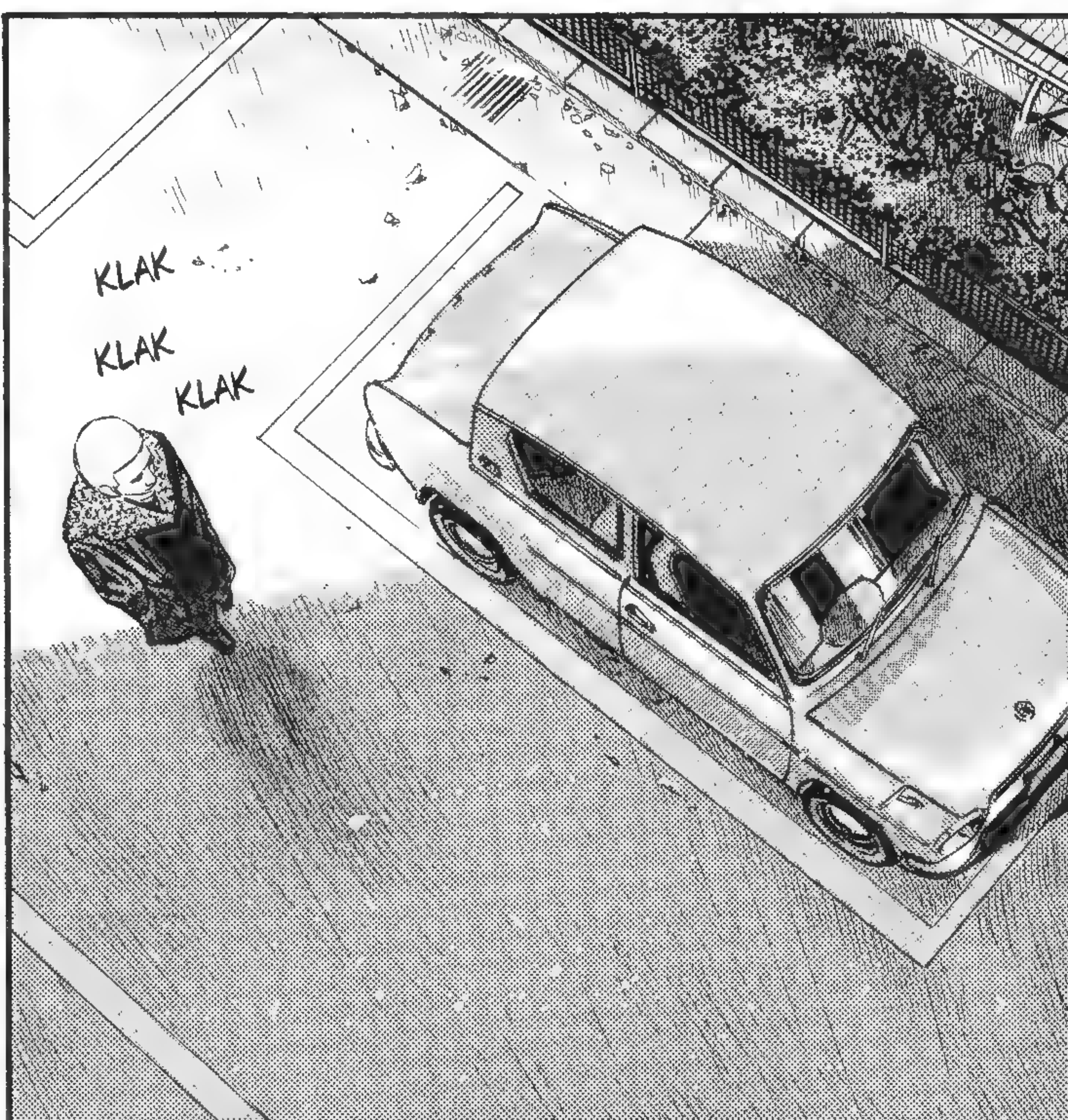




























MIND  
GIVING ME A  
FORTY THOU  
DISCOUNT?

SMIRK



THE WHOLE  
ENSEMBLE'S  
WORTH ABOUT  
TWO HUNDRED  
FORTY THOU.

I LOOKED  
IT UP  
ONLINE.



FANCY A  
WALK? MIGHT  
DO YOU SOME  
GOOD TO GET  
OUT OF THAT  
STUFFY CAR  
FOR A WHILE.

















IT USED TO MAKE  
ME NERVOUS  
SOMETIMES, YOU  
KNOW? LIKE I  
WAS LOST IN THIS  
SEA OF GREEN...

IT'S TOO  
HEAVY. THE  
PARK STARTS  
TO FEEL LIKE  
A MAZE WITH  
FOLIAGE FOR  
WALLS.



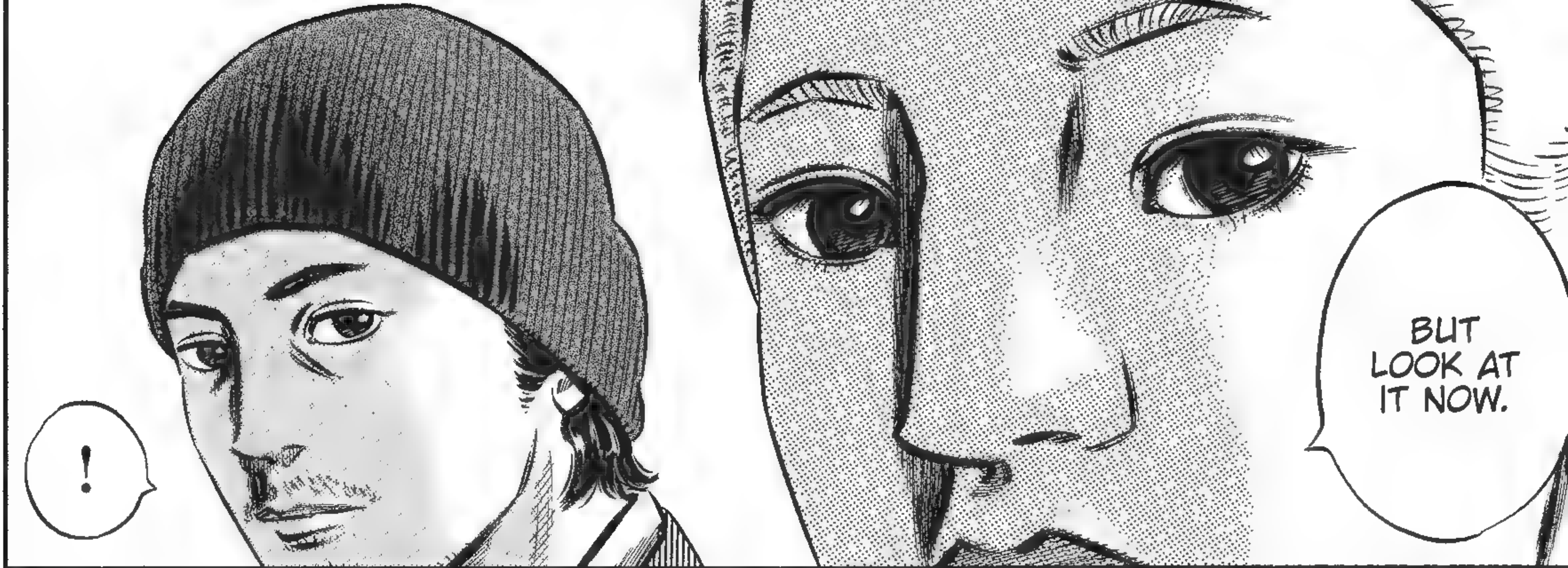
IN THE  
SUMMER,  
IT'S GREEN  
EVERYWHERE  
YOU LOOK.

IT'S THE  
LEAVES, I  
THINK.



....  
?





!

BUT  
LOOK AT  
IT NOW.



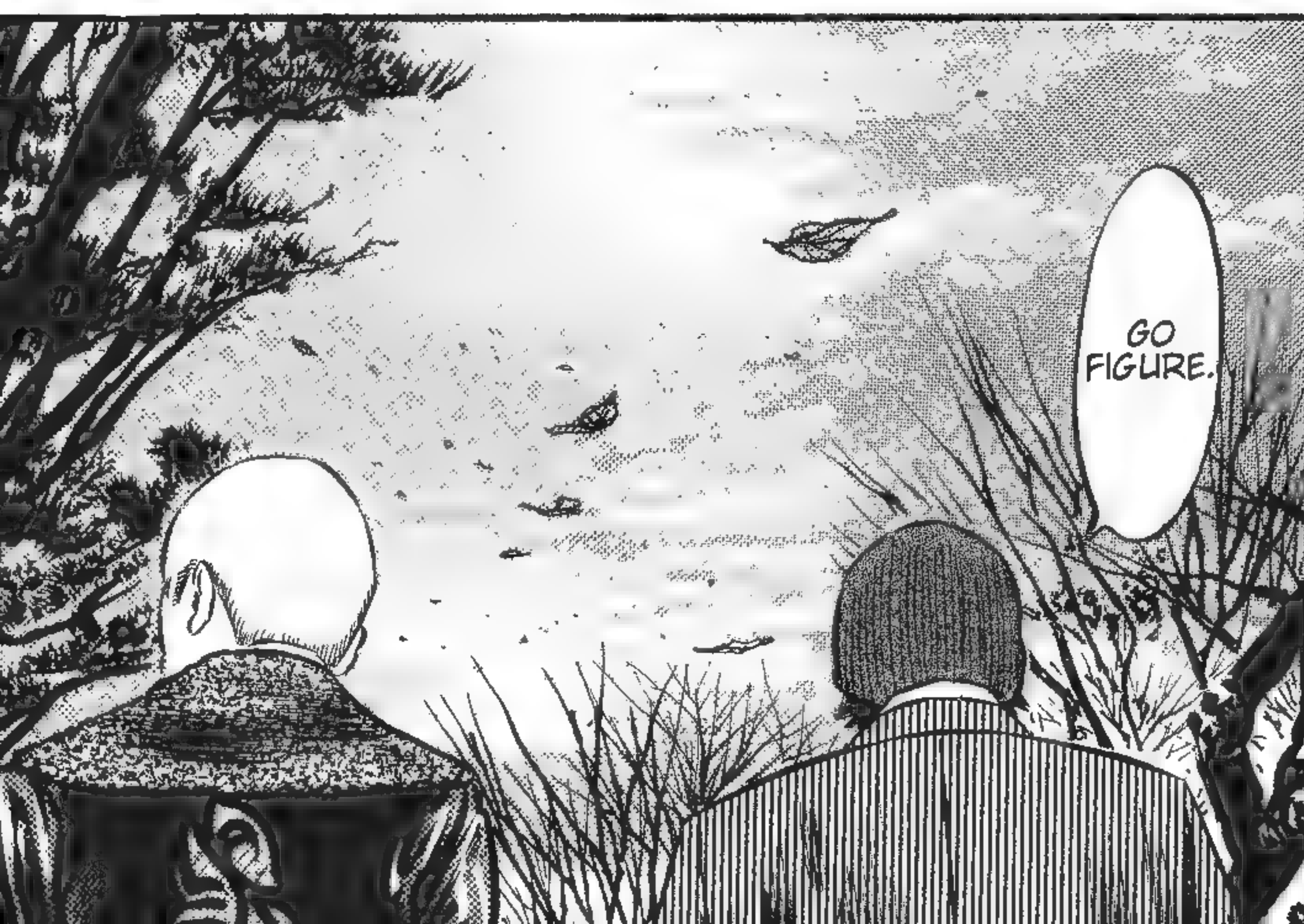
SO OPEN.  
LIKE IT  
STRETCHES  
ON FOREVER.

IT'S SO WIDE.  
NO CLUTTER,  
JUST EMPTY  
SPACE AND THE  
OCCASIONAL  
DEAD STICK.



LIKE,  
YOU CAN  
ACTUALLY SEE  
WHERE YOU'RE  
STANDING, YOU  
KNOW?



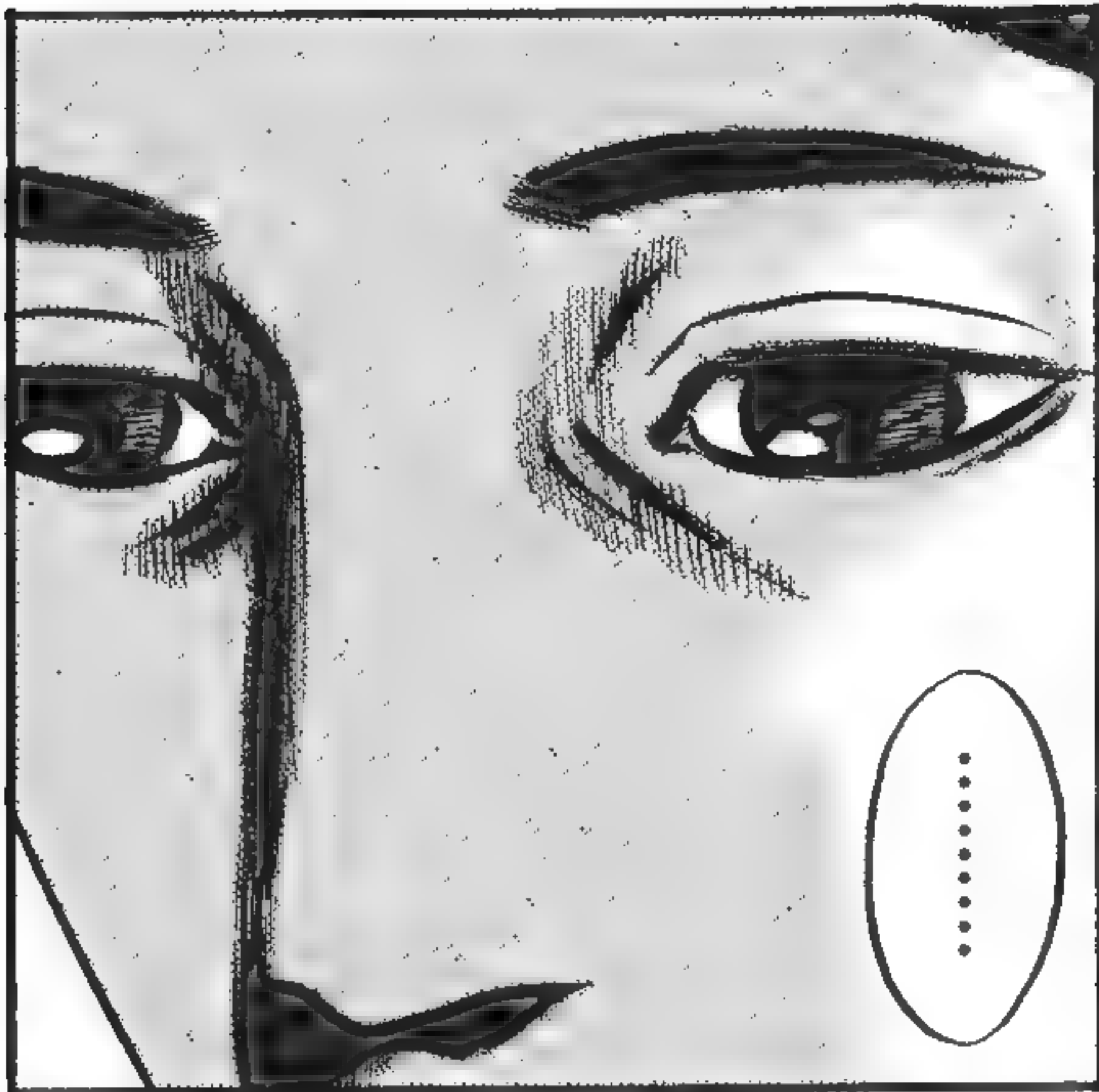






DAD  
SAYS I WAS  
OBSESSED  
WITH IT.

HE ALSO  
SAID...I USED  
TO DRESS UP  
AS A GIRL.



THE  
GUPPY LIKELY  
REPRESENTED  
BEAUTY ITSELF  
TO ME...

SO I WANTED  
TO EMULATE IT  
SOMEHOW.

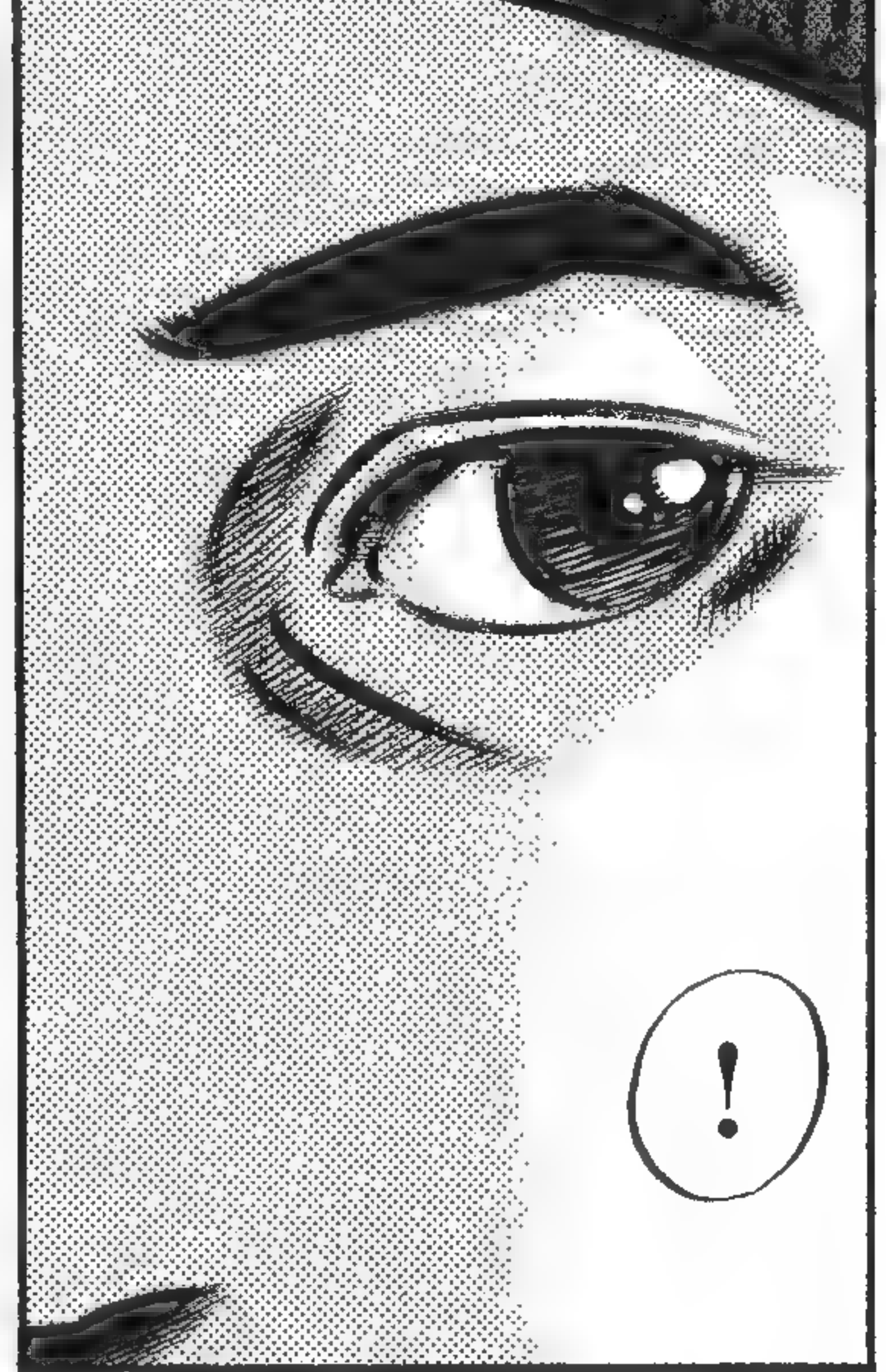


MY DAD  
SAW ALL THAT,  
PANICKED,  
AND...KILLED  
THE LITTLE  
GUY.

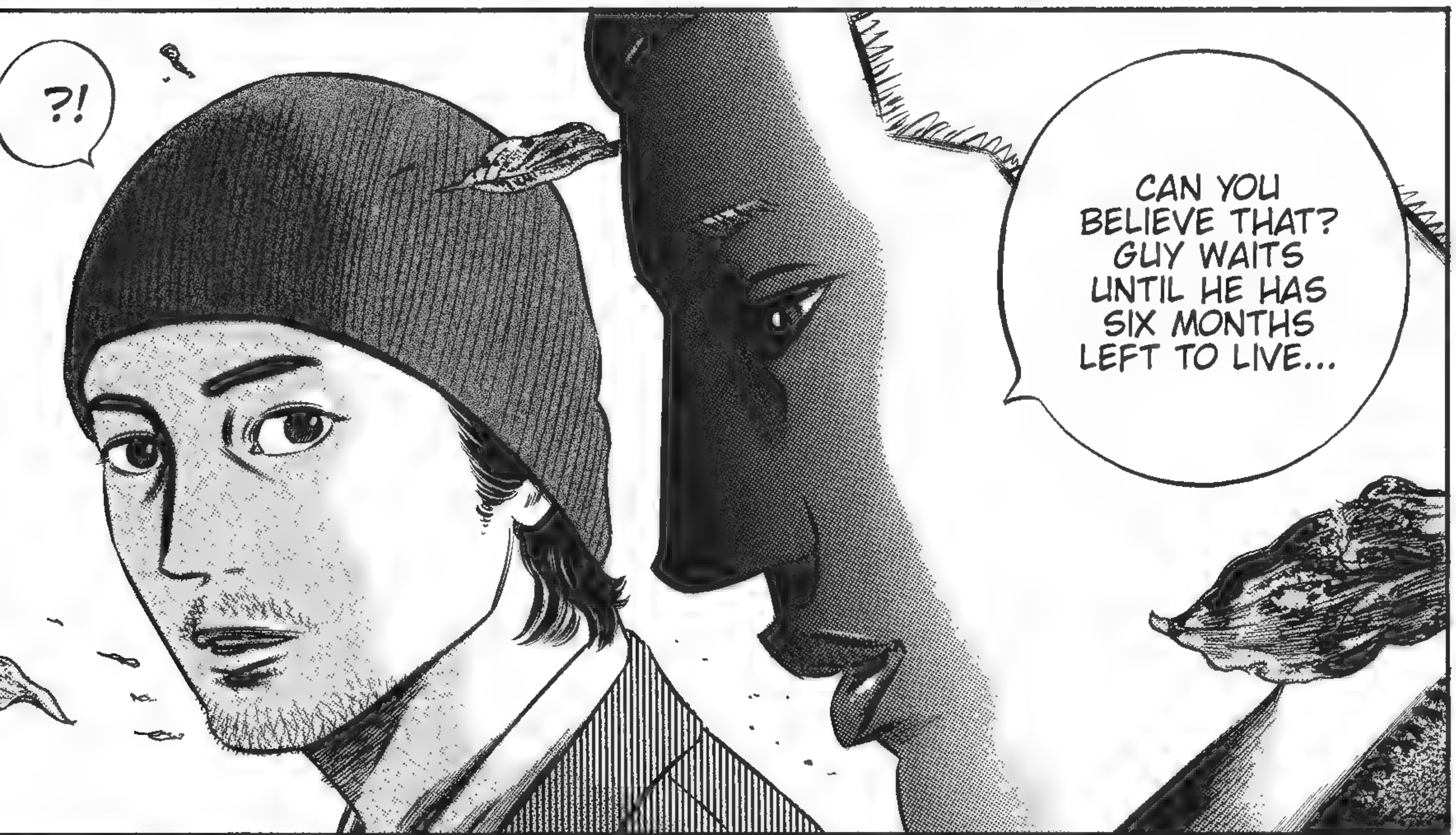




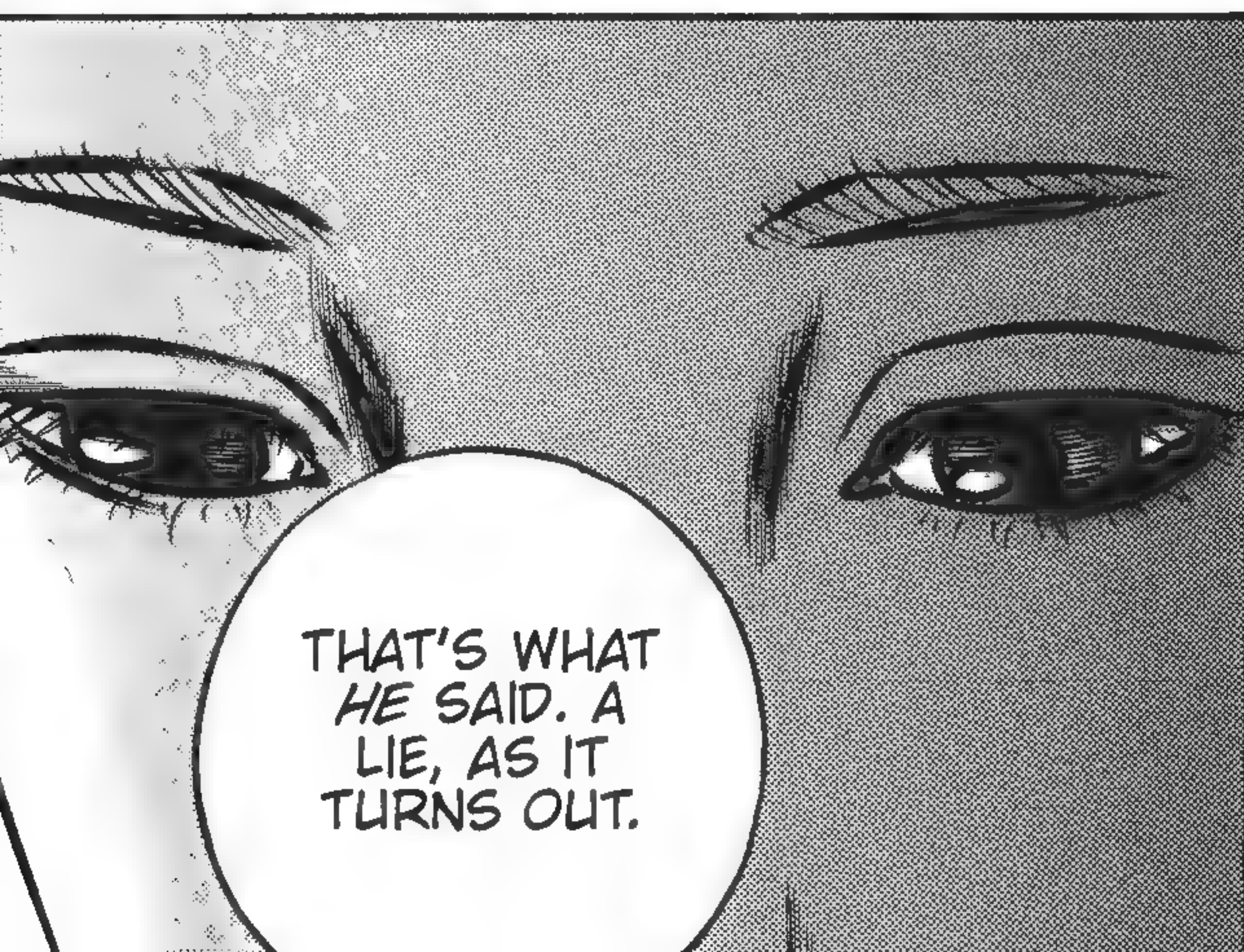
HE APOLO-  
GIZED FOR  
IT TODAY.



!



CAN YOU  
BELIEVE THAT?  
GUY WAITS  
UNTIL HE HAS  
SIX MONTHS  
LEFT TO LIVE...



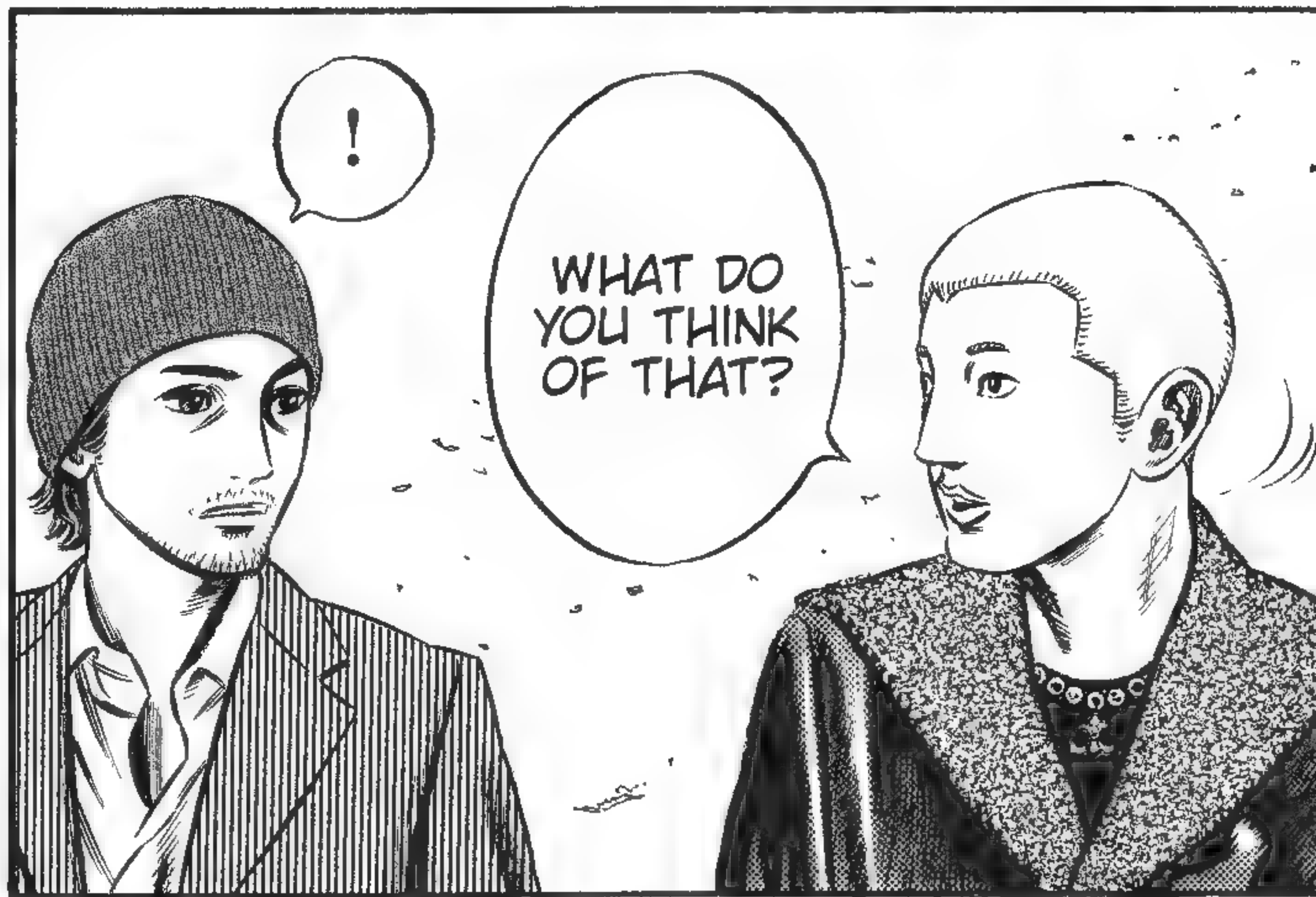
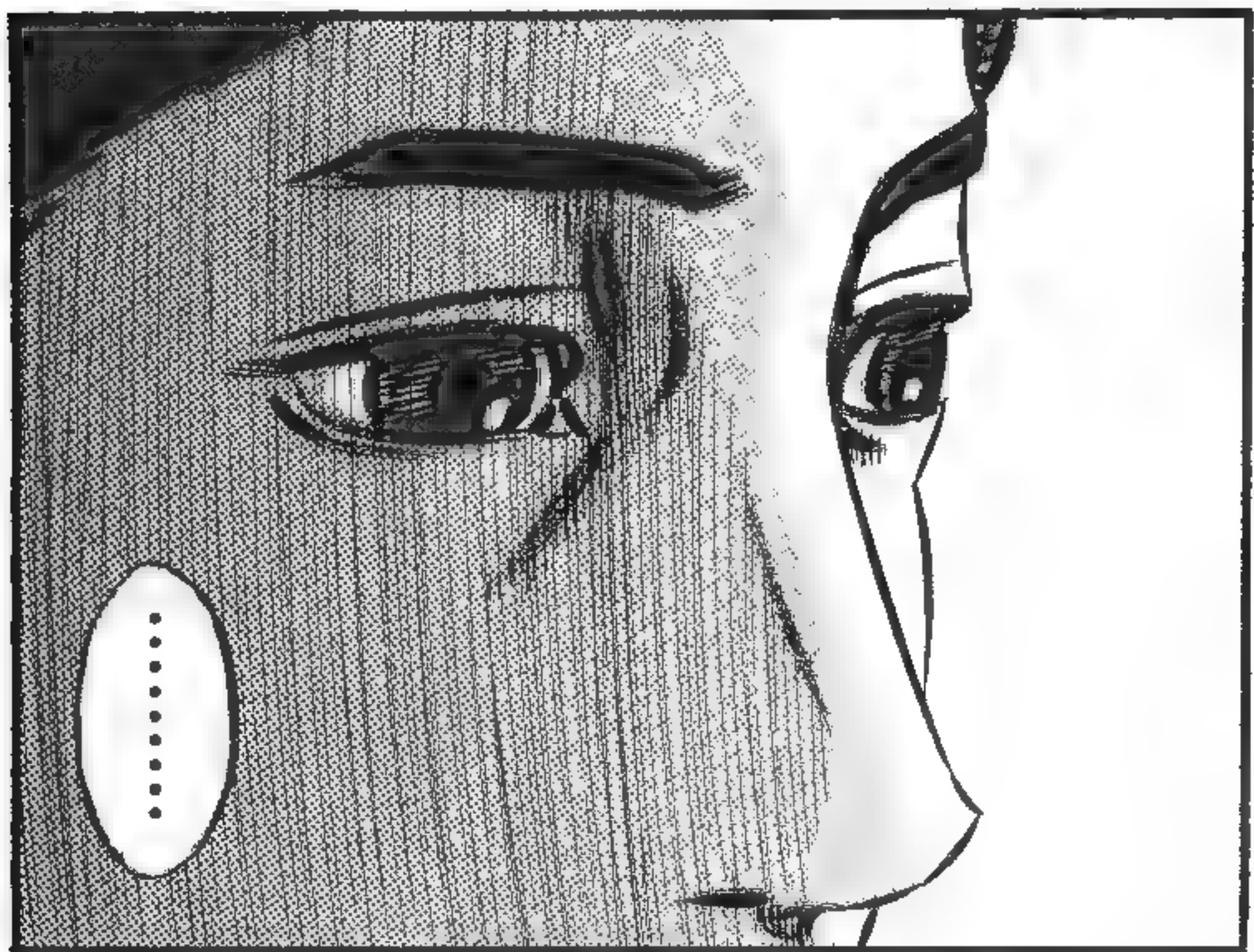
THAT'S WHAT  
HE SAID. A  
LIE, AS IT  
TURNS OUT.



YOU SAID  
HE JUST  
BROKE A  
BONE!

WHAT?













ALL YOU HAD  
TO DO WAS  
THIS...AND YOU  
SAW RIGHT  
THROUGH ME.





I'M STARTING  
TO WONDER IF  
MY LIFE HAS  
EVER FELT LIKE  
MINE... FELT  
TRULY REAL.



I'VE BEEN  
TRAPPED IN  
MY FATHER'S  
IMAGE, JUST  
LIKE IN YOUR  
SKETCH.

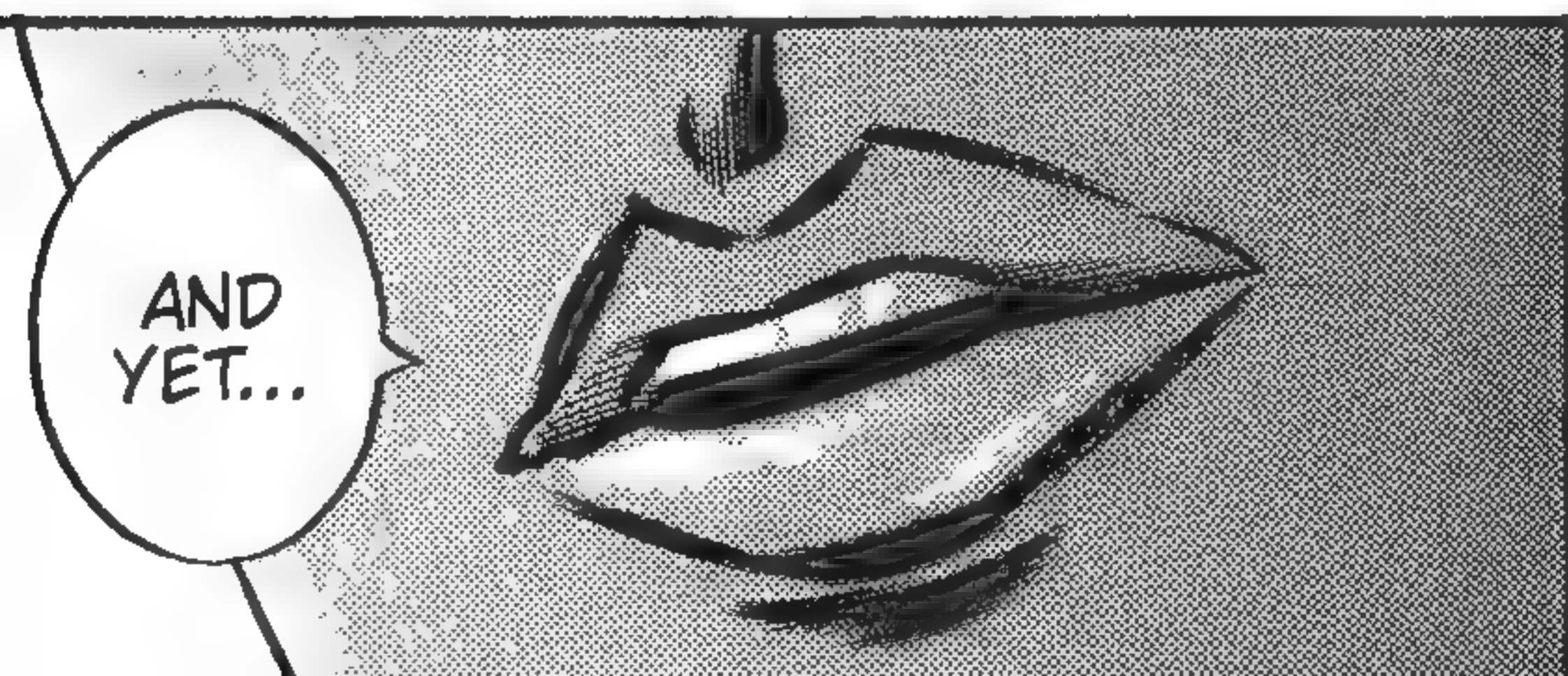
MY TRUE  
SELF ALL  
BUT LOST.



SO I'VE  
NEVER LACKED  
FOR FEMALE  
COMPANY,  
UNLIKE YOU.



LOOKS,  
MONEY... I'VE  
ALWAYS HAD  
EVERYTHING.  
YOU'D THINK  
I'D BE HAPPY.



AND  
YET...



IT'S WEIRD.  
I MEAN, I WON  
THE GENETIC  
LOTTERY IN  
TERMS OF  
ATTRACTIVE-  
NESS...

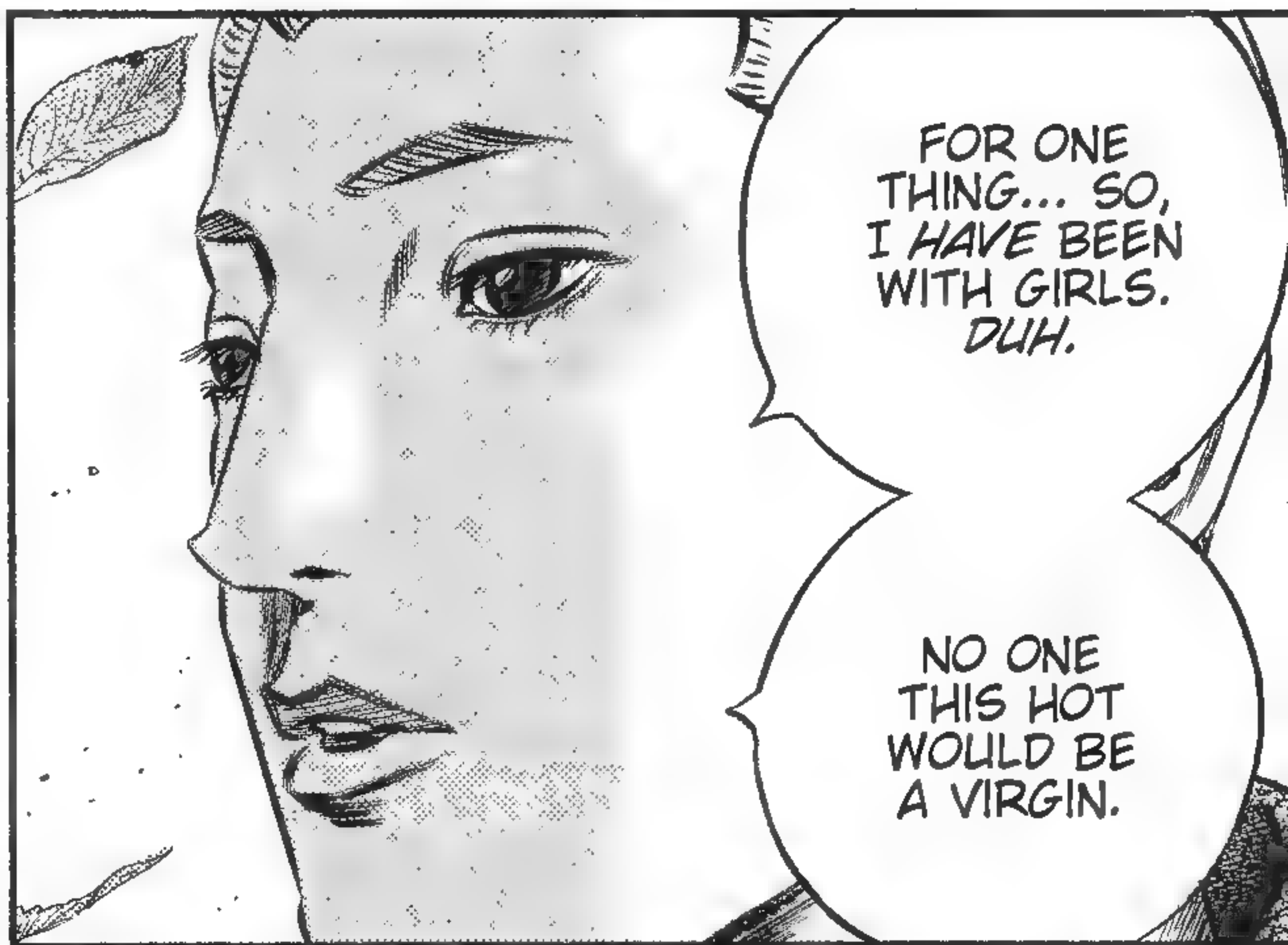




I NEVER  
REALIZED IT,  
BUT DEEP  
DOWN...IT  
ALWAYS FELT  
SO HOLLOW.



BUT...  
I'VE NEVER  
ACTUALLY  
CLIMAXED  
WITH THEM.



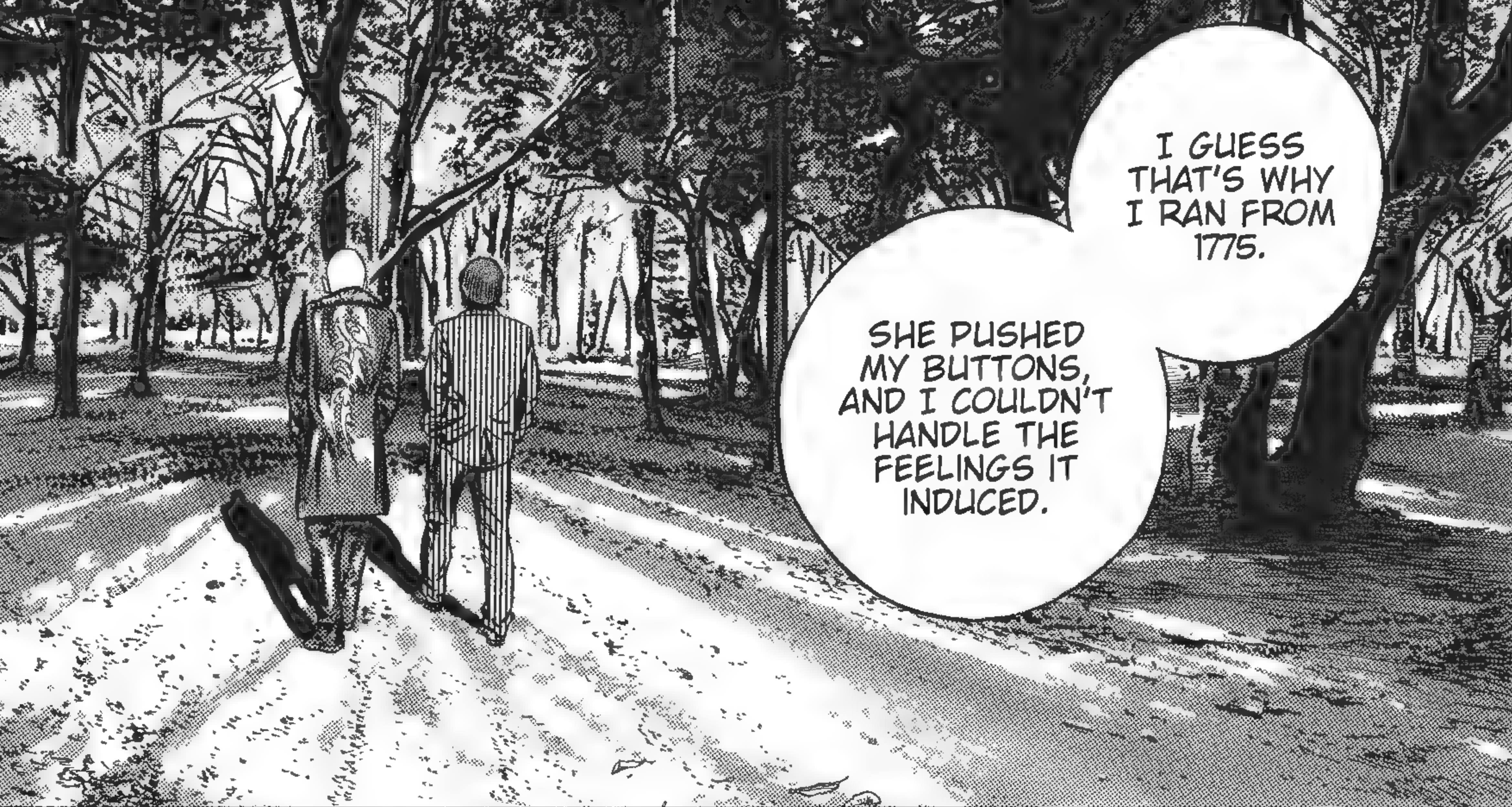
FOR ONE  
THING... SO,  
I HAVE BEEN  
WITH GIRLS.  
DUH.

NO ONE  
THIS HOT  
WOULD BE  
A VIRGIN.



SO MAYBE  
I AM A  
KIND OF  
VIRGIN!





I GUESS  
THAT'S WHY  
I RAN FROM  
1775.

SHE PUSHED  
MY BUTTONS,  
AND I COULDN'T  
HANDLE THE  
FEELINGS IT  
INDUCED.



I HAVE  
NO DESIRE  
WHATSOEVER  
TO SLEEP  
WITH YOU.

AND  
FOR THE  
RECORD,  
NAKOSHI-  
SAN...



I DON'T  
THINK  
GENDER  
DYSPHORIA  
IS THE  
ISSUE AT  
HAND.

THAT  
BEING  
SAID...



BUT...IF I  
EVER FEEL LIKE  
EXPERIMENTING  
WITH...SOME-  
THING LIKE THAT  
SOMEDAY...

I WON'T  
REPRESS IT  
ANYMORE.





THE  
CONSTRICTING  
INFLUENCE MY  
FATHER HAD  
OVER ME IS  
GONE.

FROM NOW  
ON, I'M GOING  
TO TRY AND  
LIVE MORE  
AUTHENTICALLY.

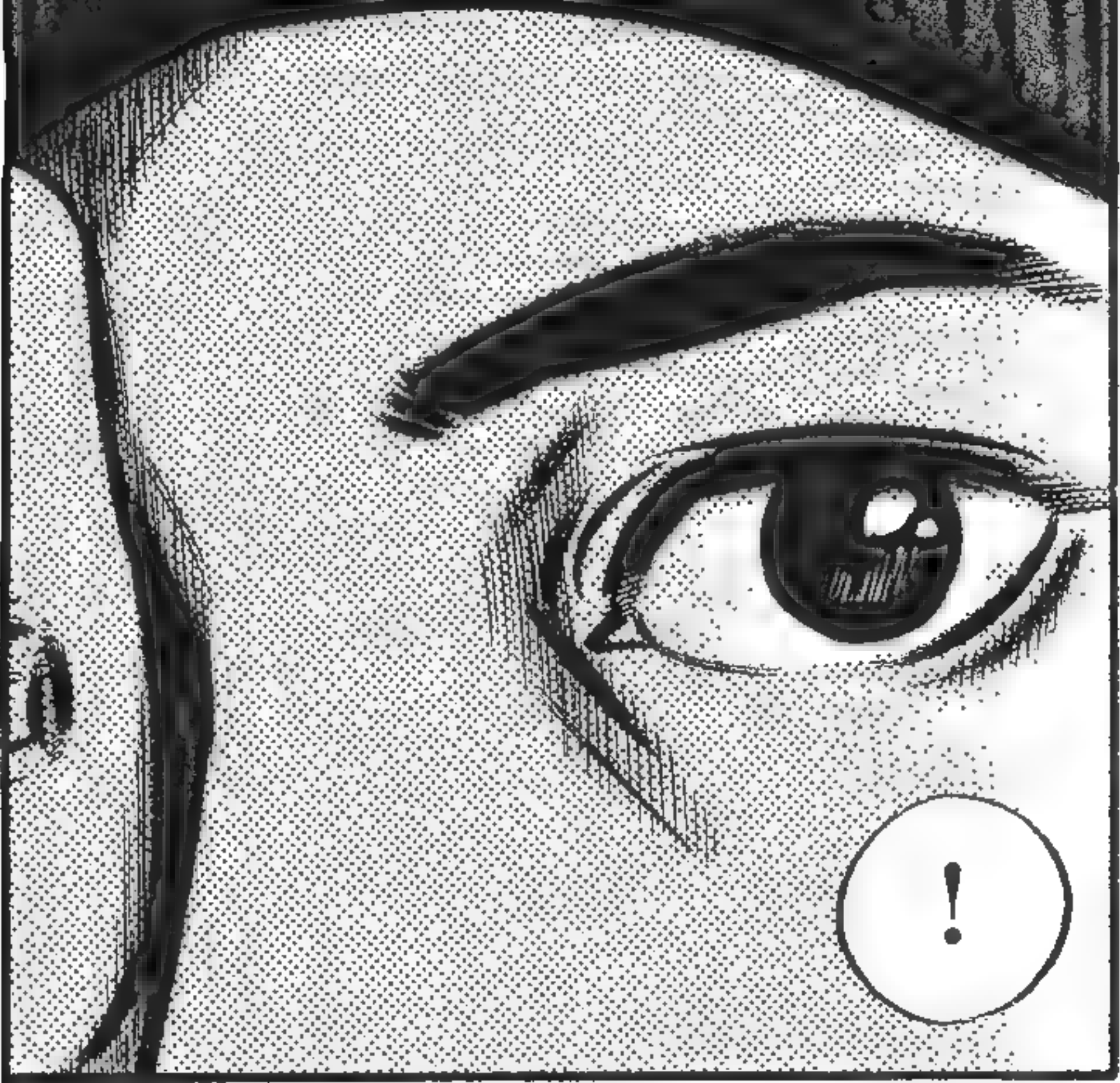


AND  
PERHAPS,  
IN TIME...I'LL  
FIND MY TRUE  
SHAPE.













SO  
THAT'S  
IT.

THAT'S  
WHY HIS  
WATER HASN'T  
TRANSFERRED  
TO ME.



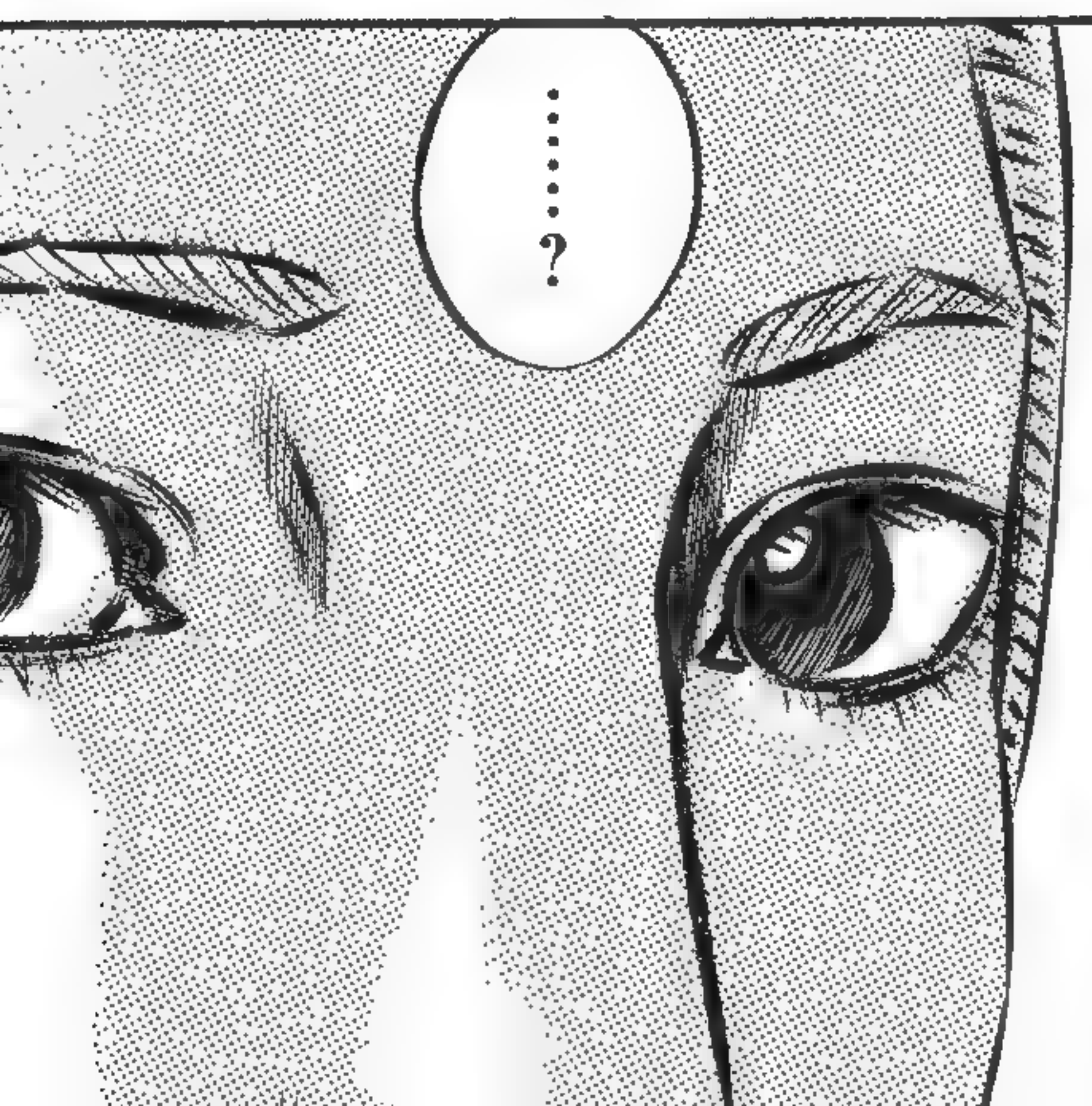
?!



YOUR  
HOMUN-  
CULUS  
HASN'T  
VANISHED  
QUITE  
YET.



S  
H  
F...



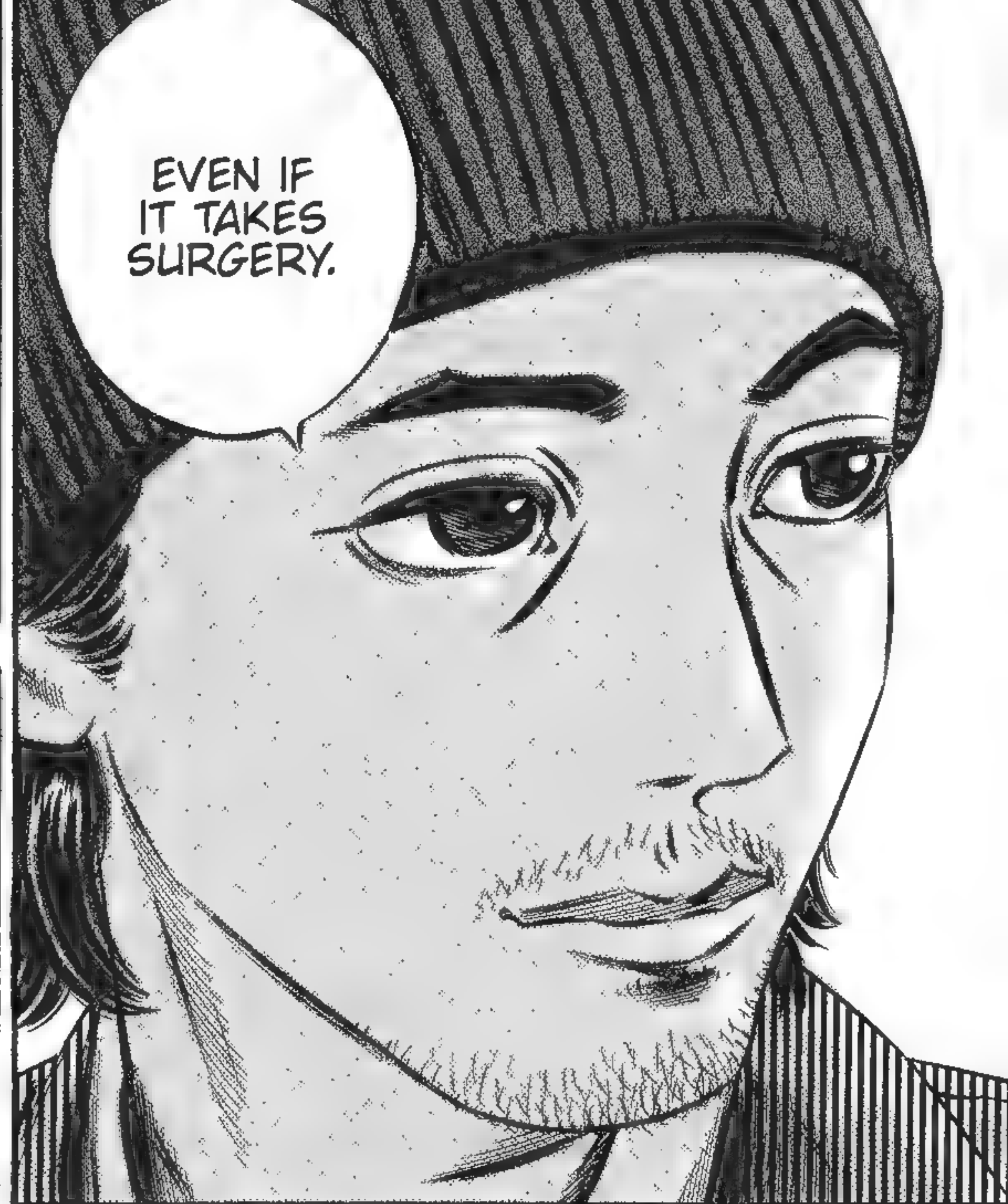
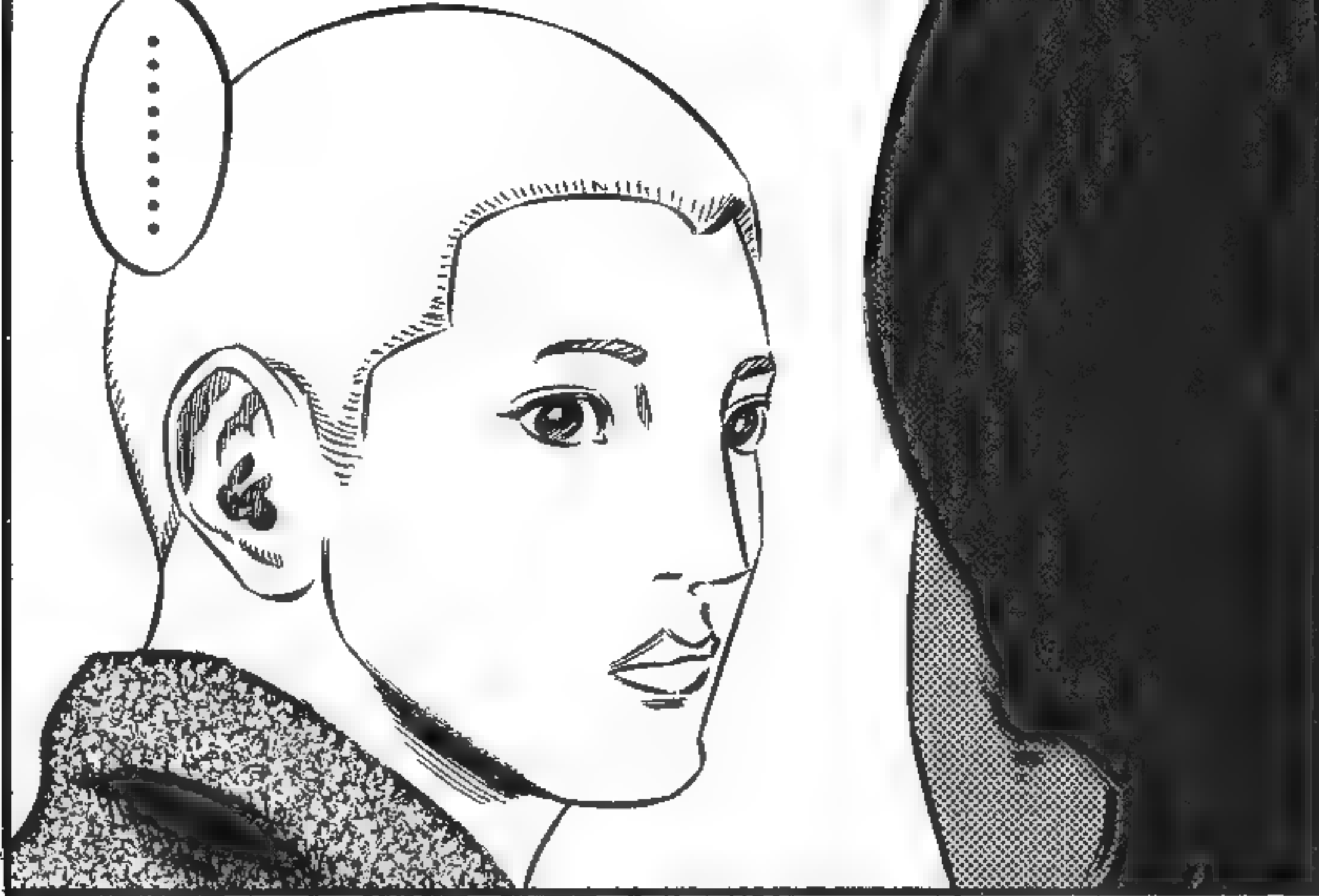
...



OVER TIME,  
YOUR REAL  
BODY WILL  
SWALLOW  
IT UP...

IT'S ALL  
RIGHT.  
THERE'S  
NO RUSH.











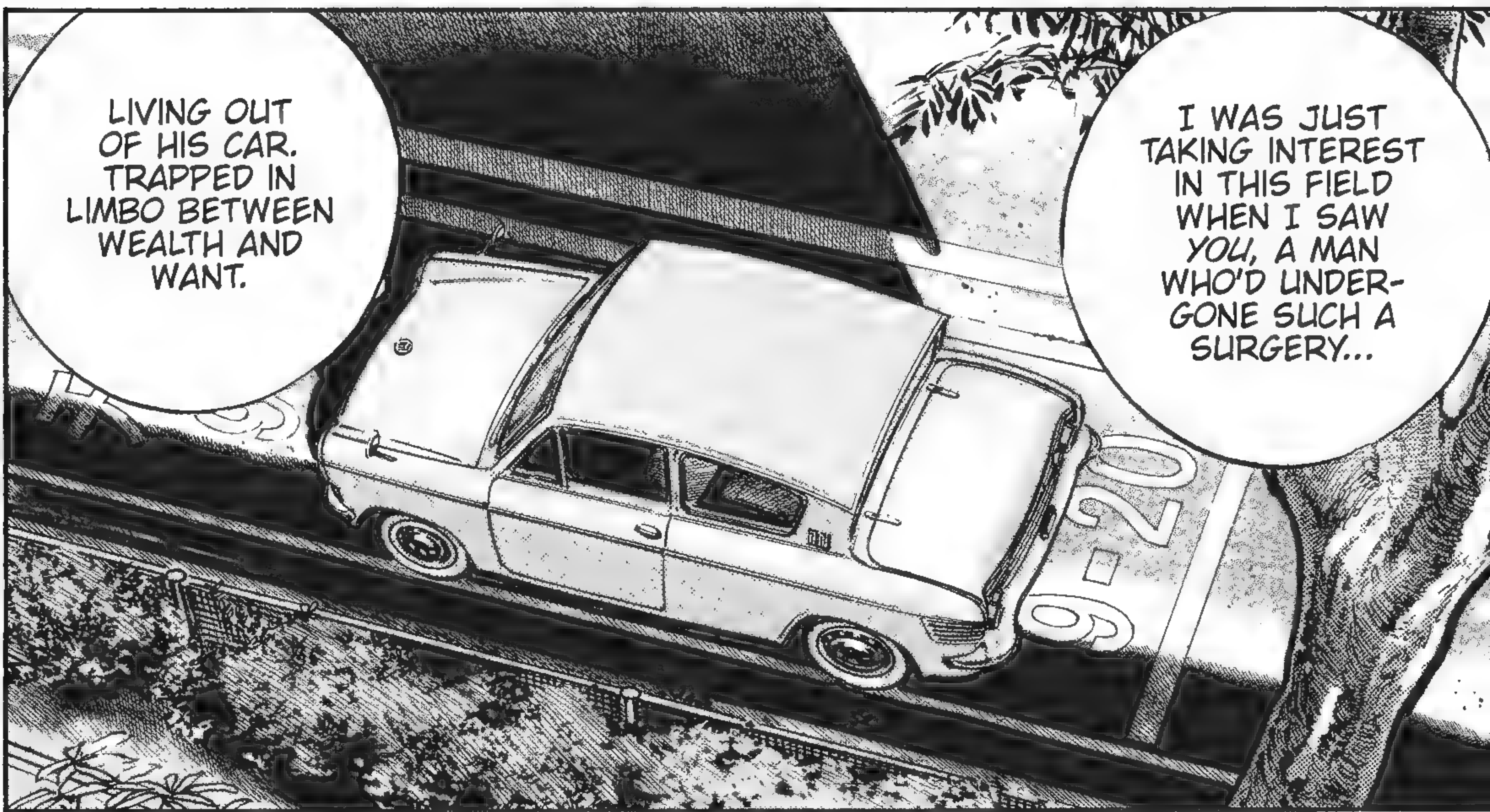


AND, BY  
EXTENSION,  
HOW ONE MIGHT  
SURGICALLY  
ALTER THAT  
FORM--THAT  
INTERESTED  
ME AS WELL.

SO, OF  
COURSE,  
THE  
HUMAN  
FORM...



I'VE STUDIED  
HUMAN BEINGS  
EXTENSIVELY,  
FROM EVERY  
ANGLE.



LIVING OUT  
OF HIS CAR.  
TRAPPED IN  
LIMBO BETWEEN  
WEALTH AND  
WANT.

I WAS JUST  
TAKING INTEREST  
IN THIS FIELD  
WHEN I SAW  
YOU, A MAN  
WHO'D UNDER-  
GONE SUCH A  
SURGERY...



NAKOSHI-  
SAN...

!





IF YOU'VE  
HAD  
COSMETIC  
SURGERY...

HOW  
COULD YOU  
POSSIBLY BE  
HERE, LIVING  
THE WAY  
YOU DO?



MEANING  
...?



?!



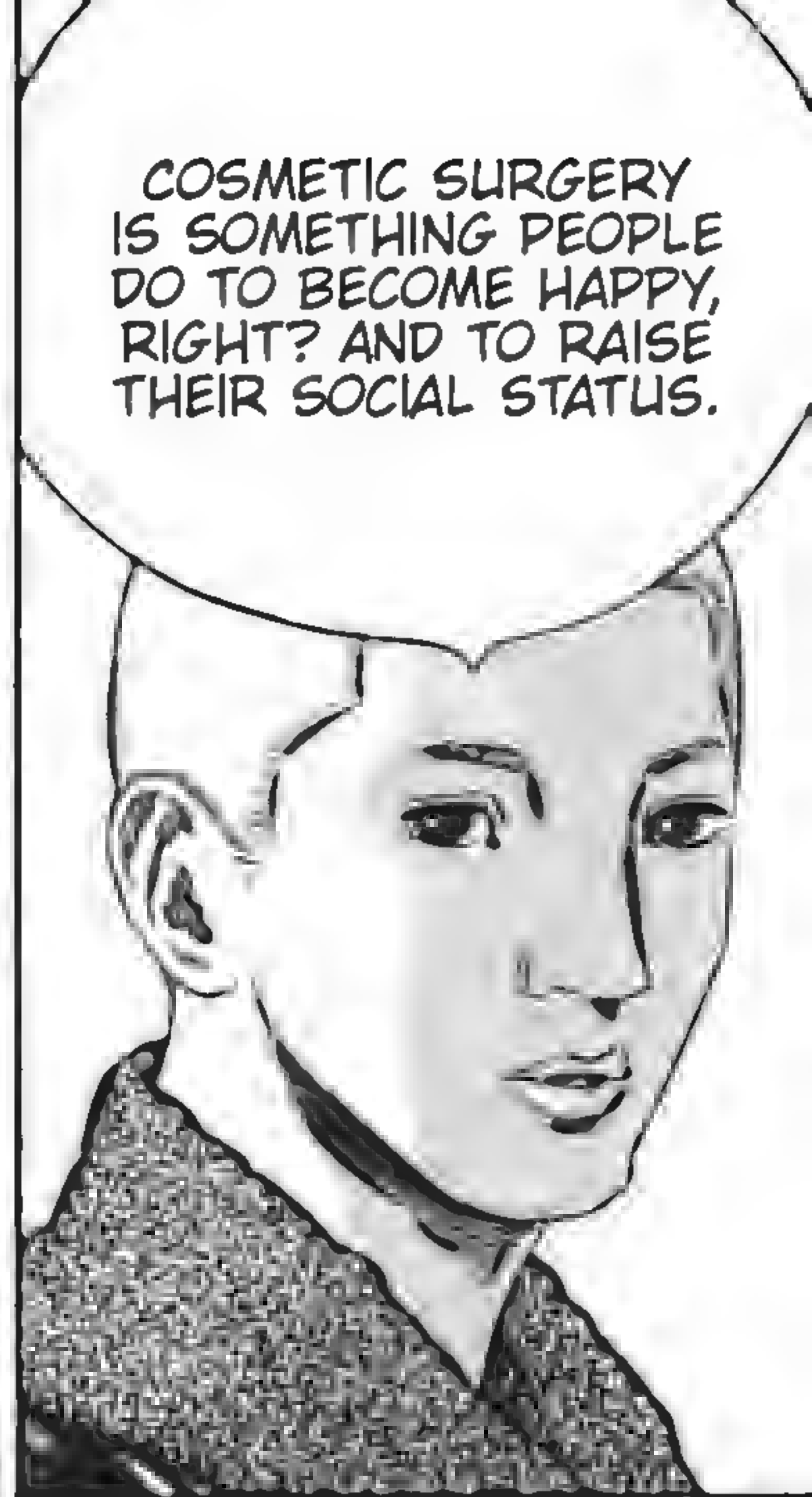


HOW COULD  
SOMEONE  
WHO'D BEEN  
UNDER THE  
KNIFE WIND  
UP IN YOUR  
SITUATION?

SO  
HOW?



COSMETIC SURGERY  
IS SOMETHING PEOPLE  
DO TO BECOME HAPPY,  
RIGHT? AND TO RAISE  
THEIR SOCIAL STATUS.



IN HINDSIGHT,  
I THINK I  
HARBORED  
SOME LATENT  
ANXIETY  
OVER MY  
APPEARANCE...



SOME HOPE  
I DIDN'T  
KNOW I  
NEEDED.



LIPOSUCTION  
AND INJECTION

AND MY  
STUDIES  
BROUGHT  
THAT PART  
OF ME...





A FOUR-  
WHEELED  
SQUATTER  
WITH A  
PLASTIC  
FACE.



AND  
THEN I  
FOUND  
YOU.



A MAN  
SILENTLY  
RUMINATING  
OVER  
COUNTLESS  
QUESTIONS.


A MAN  
WHO TELLS  
NOTHING  
BUT LIES.



I HAD  
TO STUDY  
YOU.

MY  
REPPRESSED  
INSECURITIES  
TURNED INTO  
INTEREST.





HOW DID  
SOMEONE LIKE  
YOU, WHO HAD THE  
DESIRE AND MEANS  
TO UNDERGO PLASTIC  
SURGERY, WIND UP  
HOMELESS?

SO...  
WHAT'S  
THE  
STORY?

!

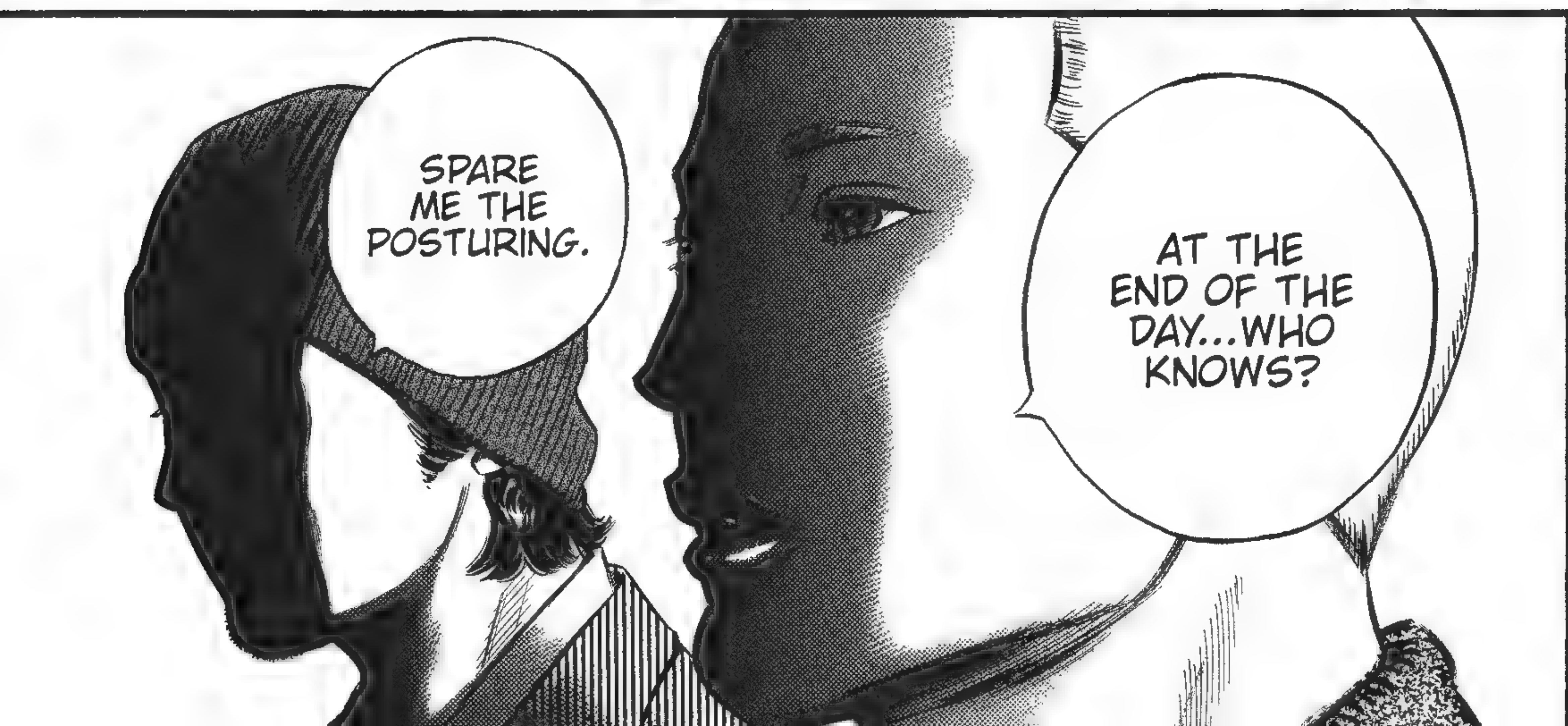
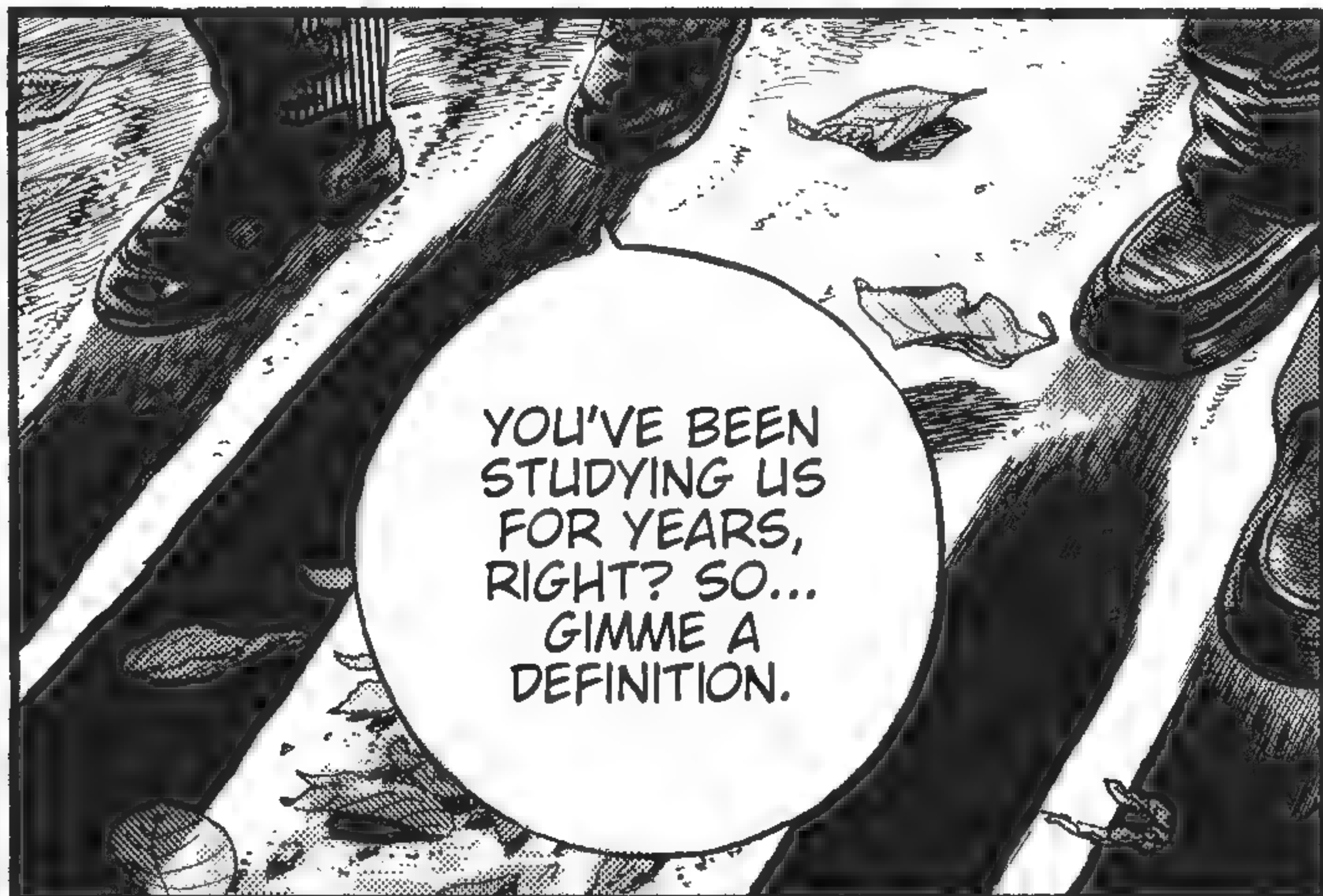
















A HUMAN  
BEING...

IS JUST  
"FORM."

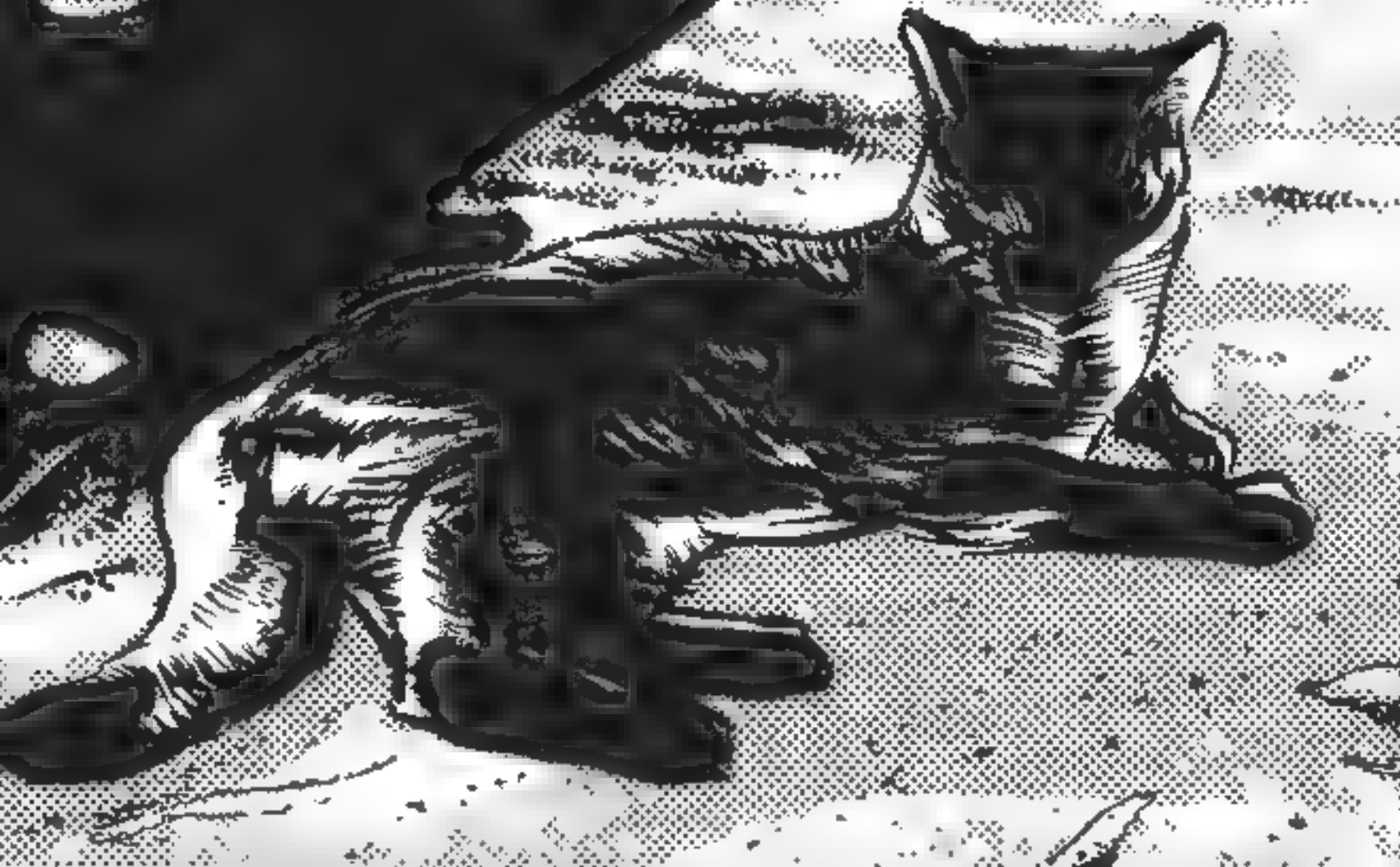


ANYONE  
WHO PREACHES  
ABOUT "SOULS"  
OR "INNER  
BEAUTY" IS  
FULL OF SHIT.



!





TRUTH IS,  
OUR PHYSICAL  
FORM IS ALL  
WE HAVE.



WITHOUT  
THEM, WE'D  
BE NUMB.  
SEVERED  
FROM  
SOCIETY.

EYES, EARS,  
NOSE, SKIN,  
TONGUE--  
THEY'RE THE  
ONLY WAY WE  
CAN EXPERIENCE  
THE WORLD.



"HUMANITY"  
WOULDN'T  
EXIST.

SURE, MAYBE  
THERE'S SOME  
KIND OF "SOUL"  
AT THE HELM, BUT  
STILL--WITHOUT  
OUR BODIES...

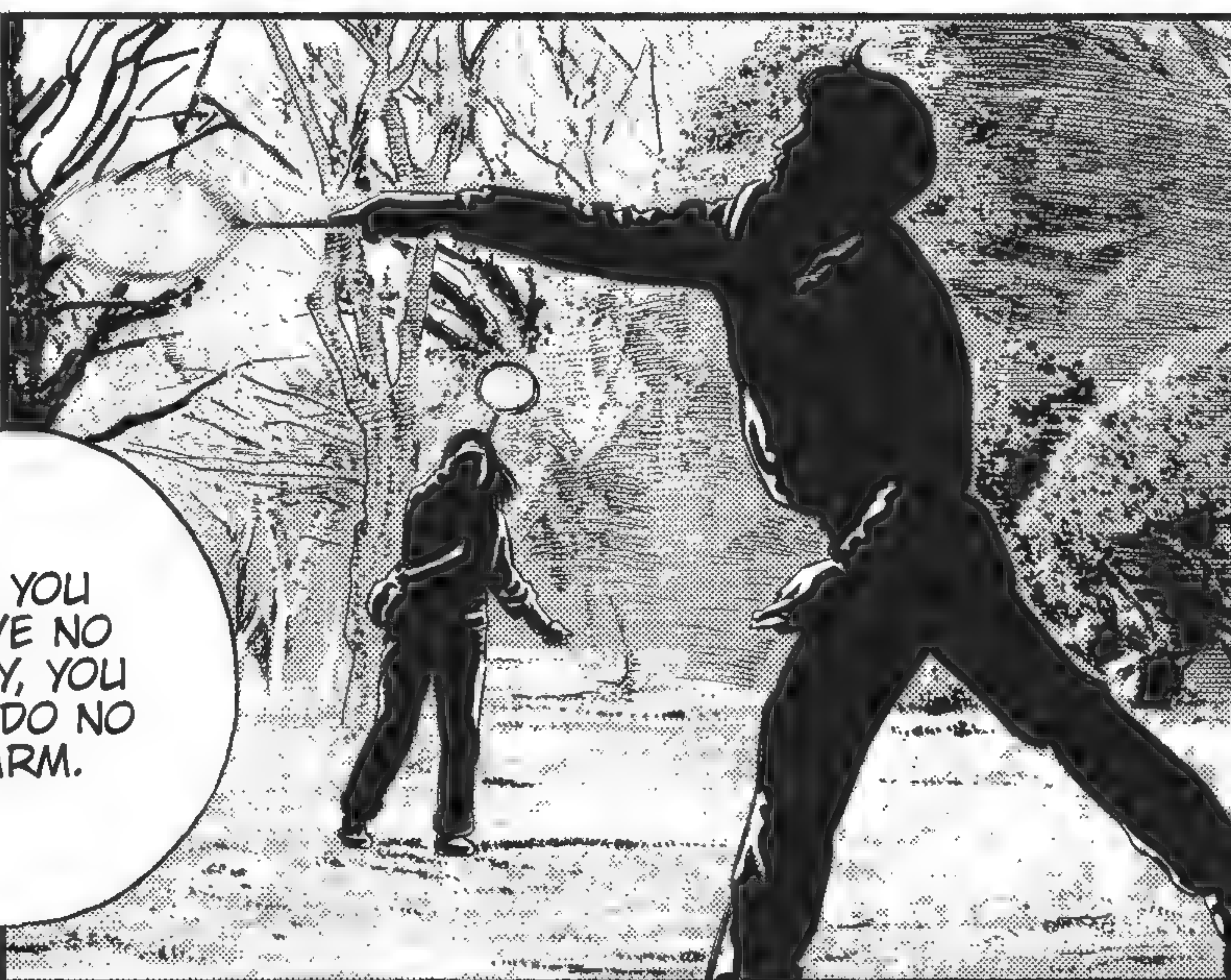




IF YOU  
CANNOT  
SPEAK, YOU  
CANNOT LIE.




IF YOU  
HAVE NO  
BODY, YOU  
CAN DO NO  
HARM.




IF THOSE  
AROUND YOU  
HAD NO EYES,  
YOU WOULDN'T  
CRAVE THEIR  
GAZE.






LOATHE ANY  
PART OF OUR-  
SELVES THAT'S  
A CENTIMETER  
TOO BIG, TOO  
SMALL, TOO  
ANYTHING.




BECAUSE  
WE HAVE BODIES,  
WE AGONIZE  
OVER BLEMISHES  
ONLY A FEW  
MILLIMETERS  
WIDE.




AND THE  
LOSS OF  
ONE TOOTH  
THROWS  
US INTO A  
TAILSPIN.




BUT EXTRA  
MILLIMETERS  
IN THE NOSE  
TURN US OFF.



EYES JUST  
MILLIMETERS  
LARGER THAN  
AVERAGE  
DRAW THE  
GAZE...

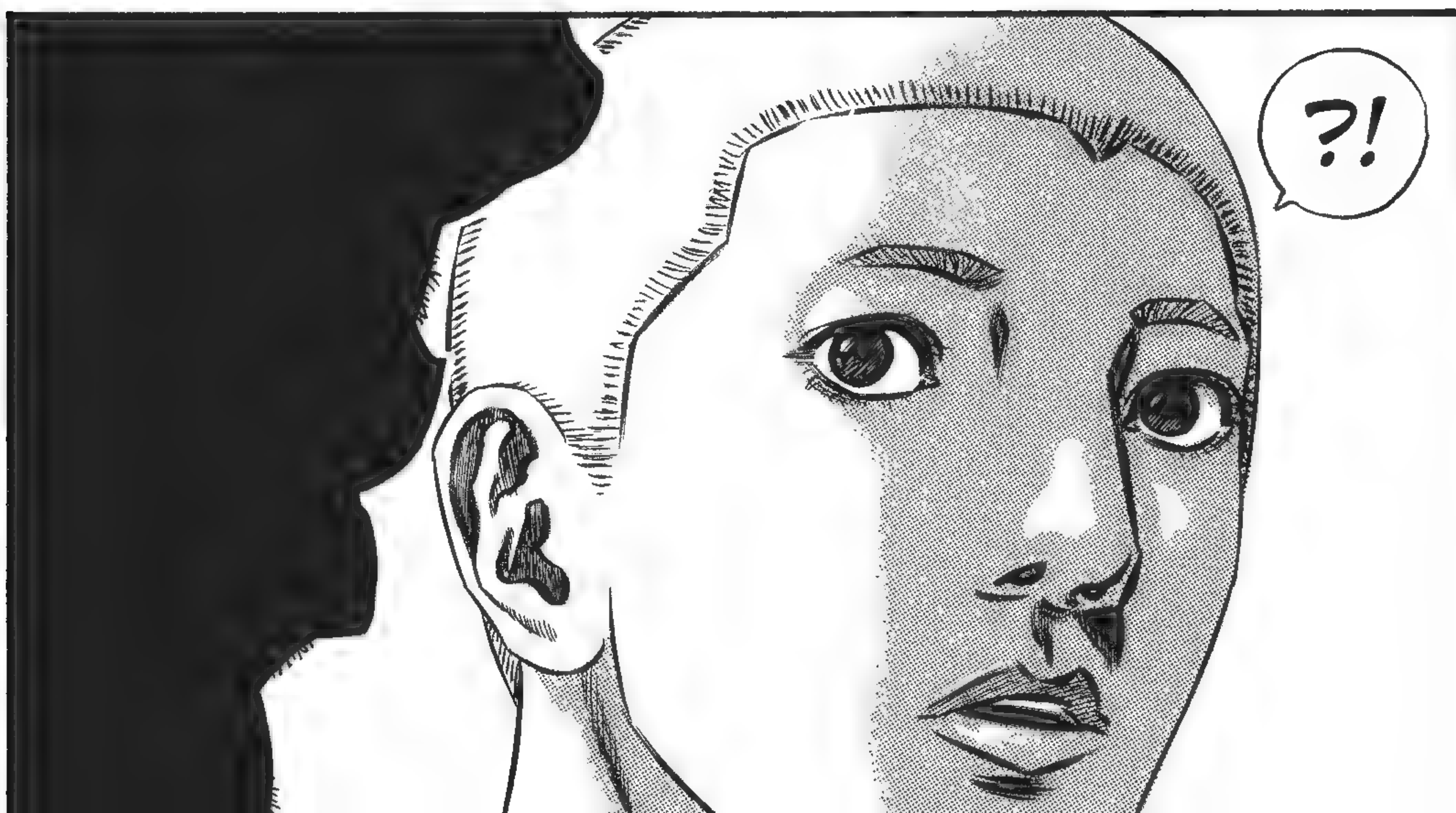


WHILE A  
MAN A FEW  
CENTIMETERS  
TOO SHORT IS  
COMPLETELY  
IGNORED.




A WOMAN  
CENTIMETERS  
SLIMMER  
THAN MOST  
IS OGLED...









IT IS  
BECAUSE OF  
MY SHAPE  
THAT I  
SUFFER!





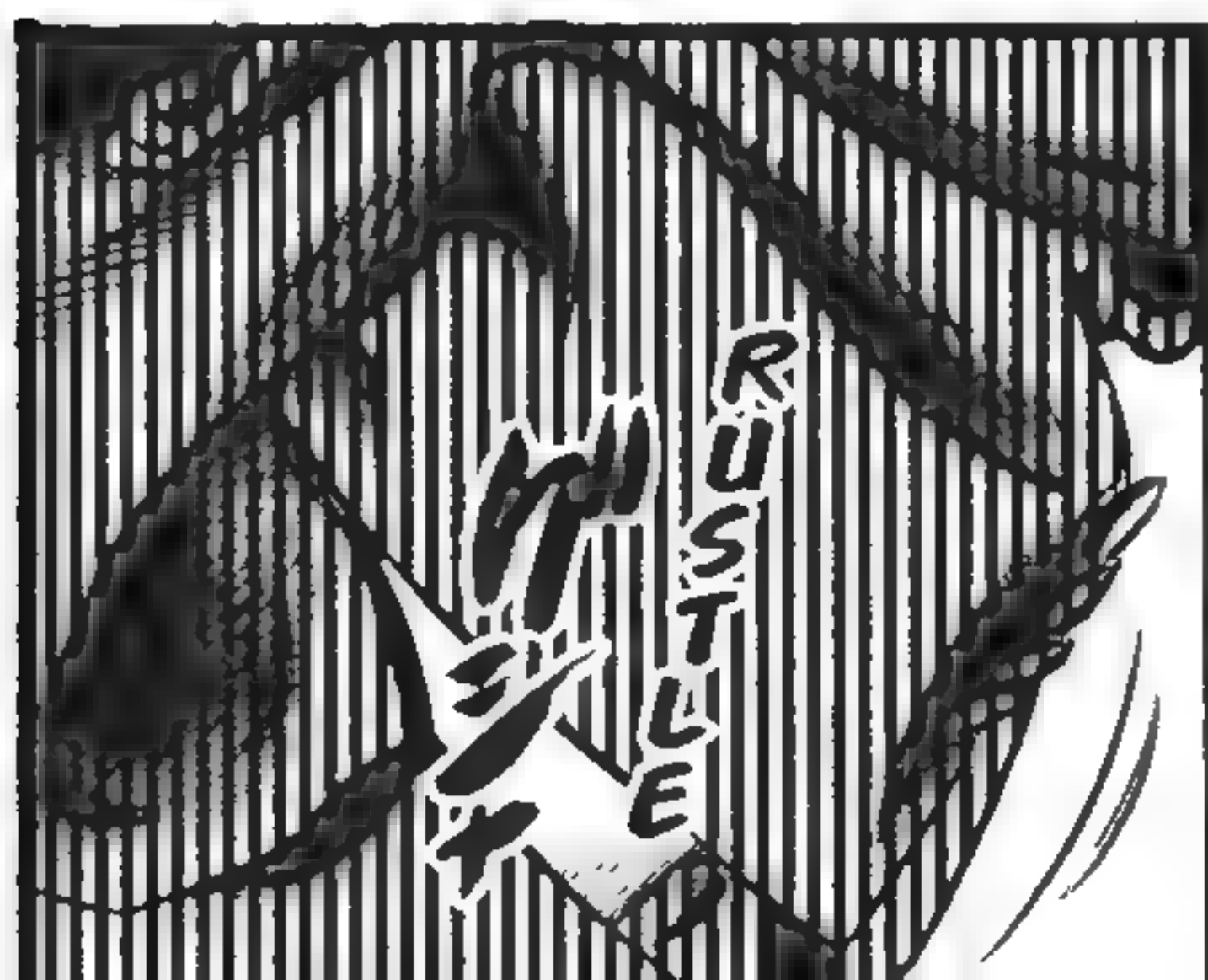
OR, AT  
LEAST...

THAT'S WHAT  
I THOUGHT  
BEFORE I  
GOT THE  
SURGERY.



YOU  
REMEMBERED  
YOUR OLD  
LIFE?

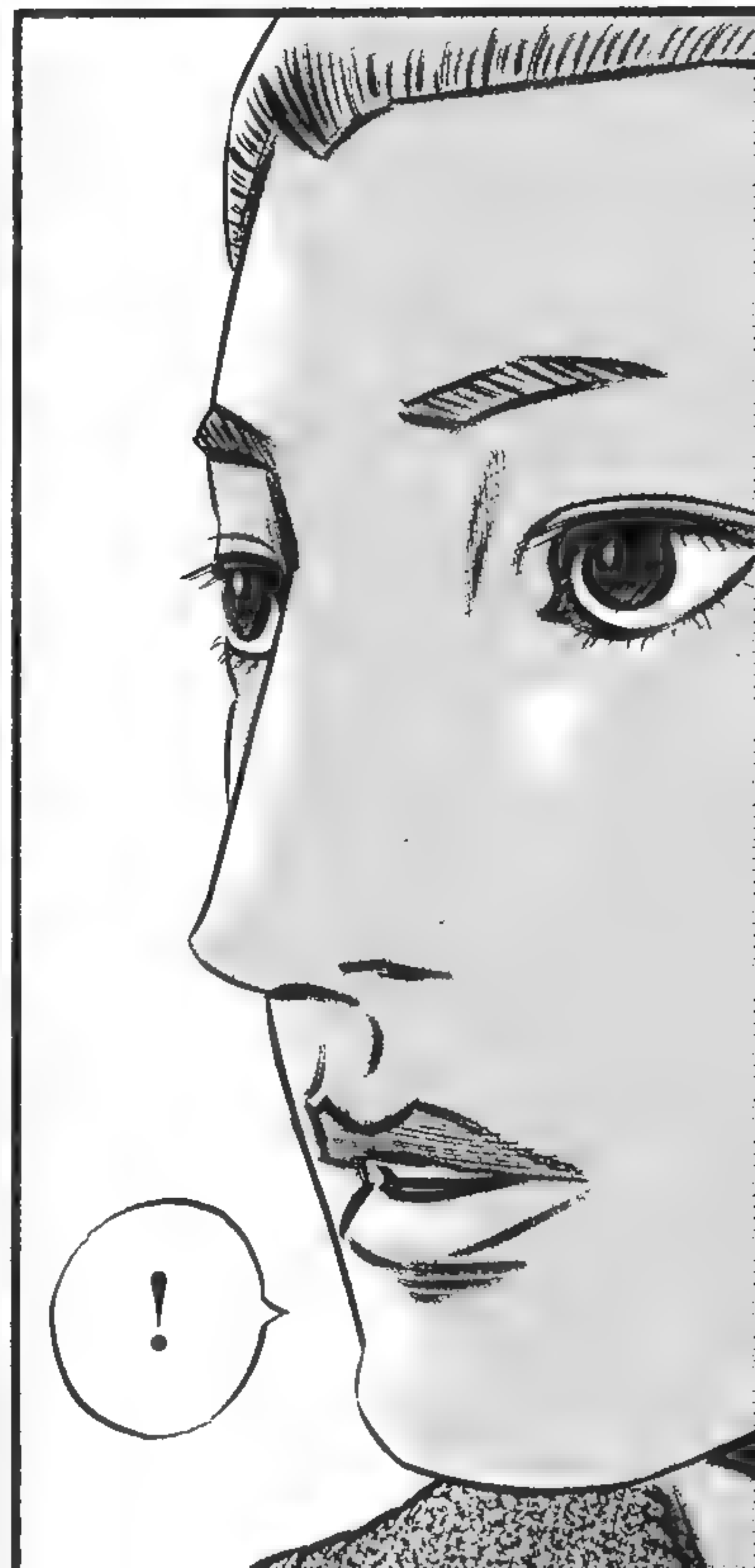
.....



RUSTLED  
WINGS

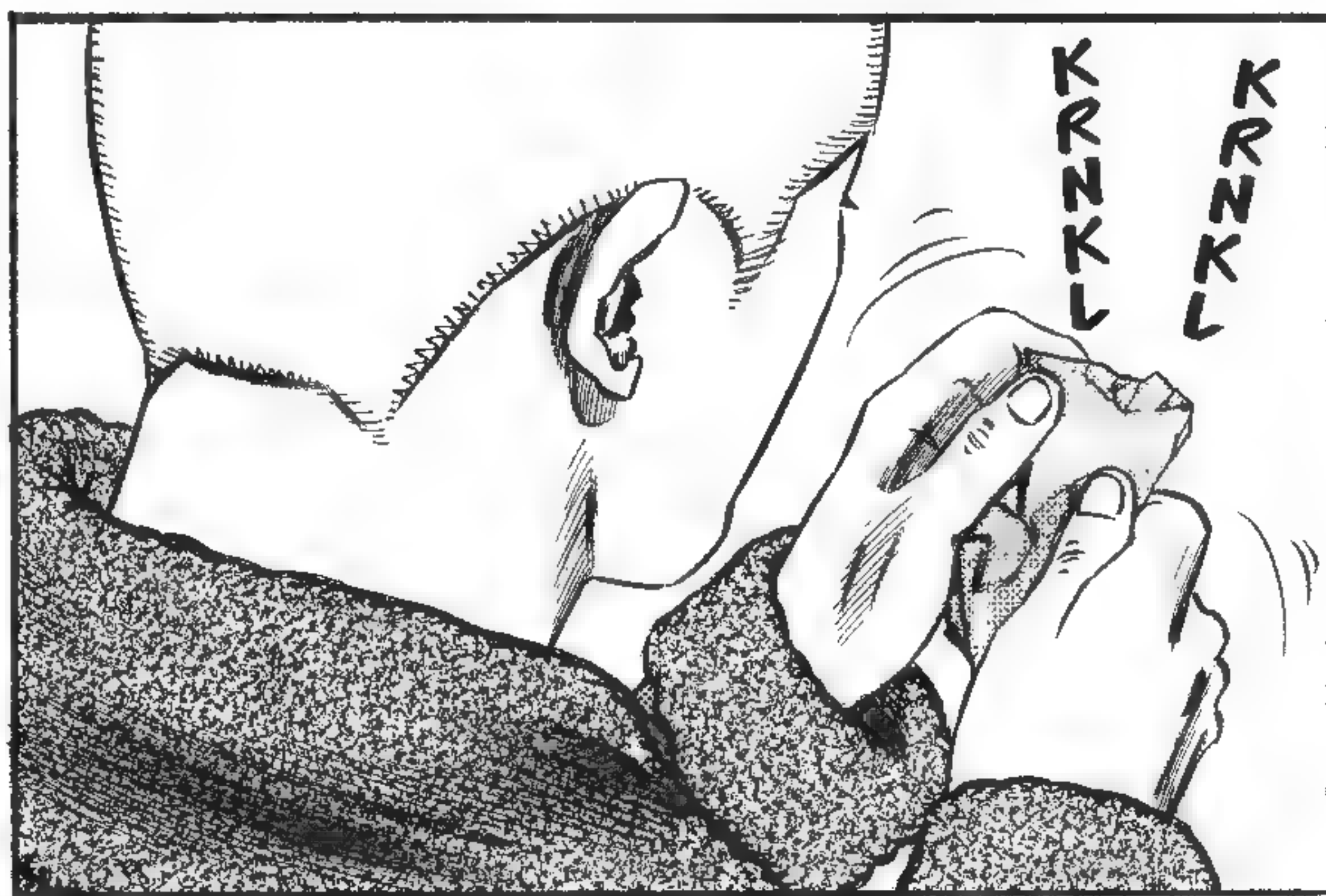
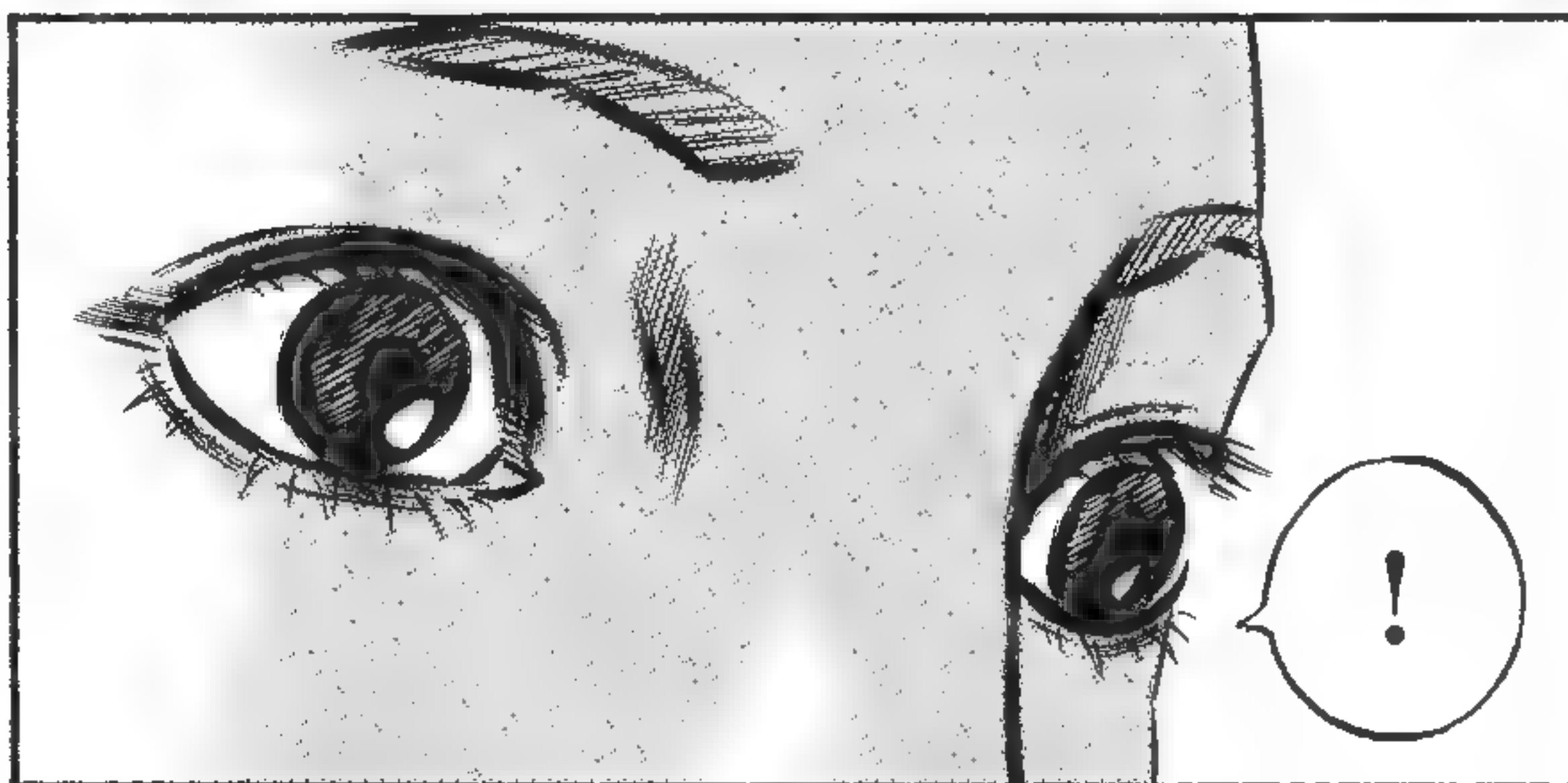
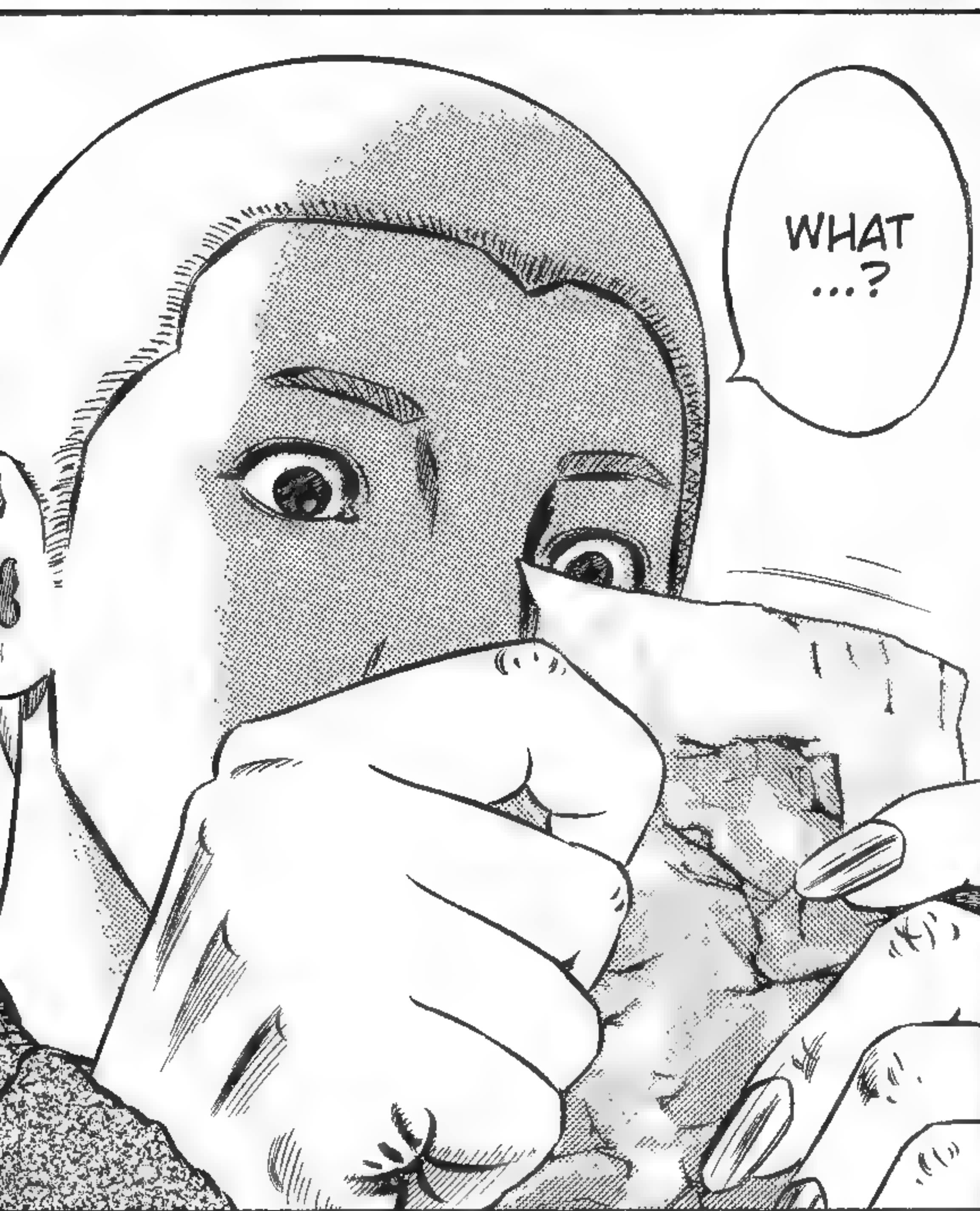
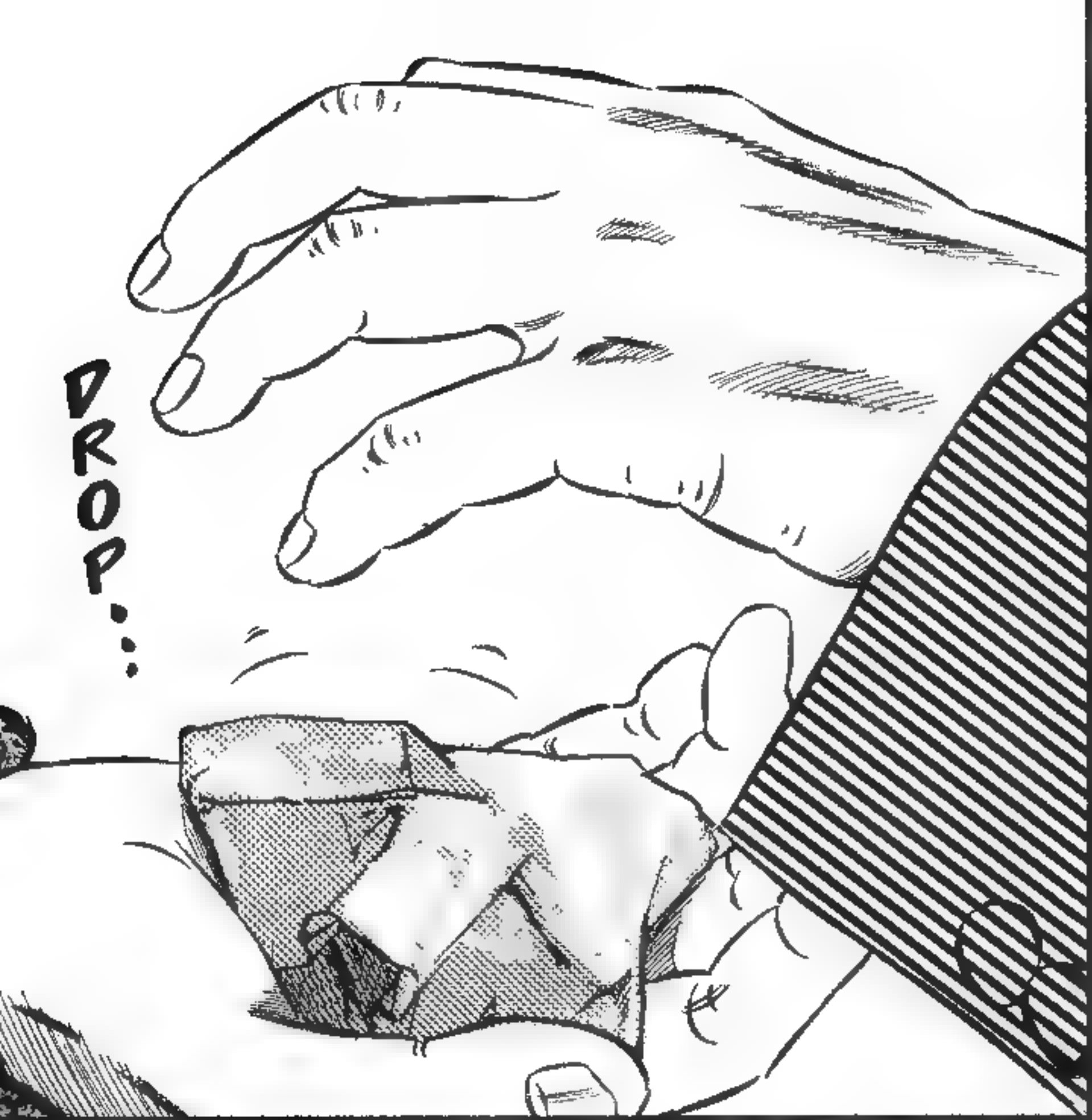


YEAH.

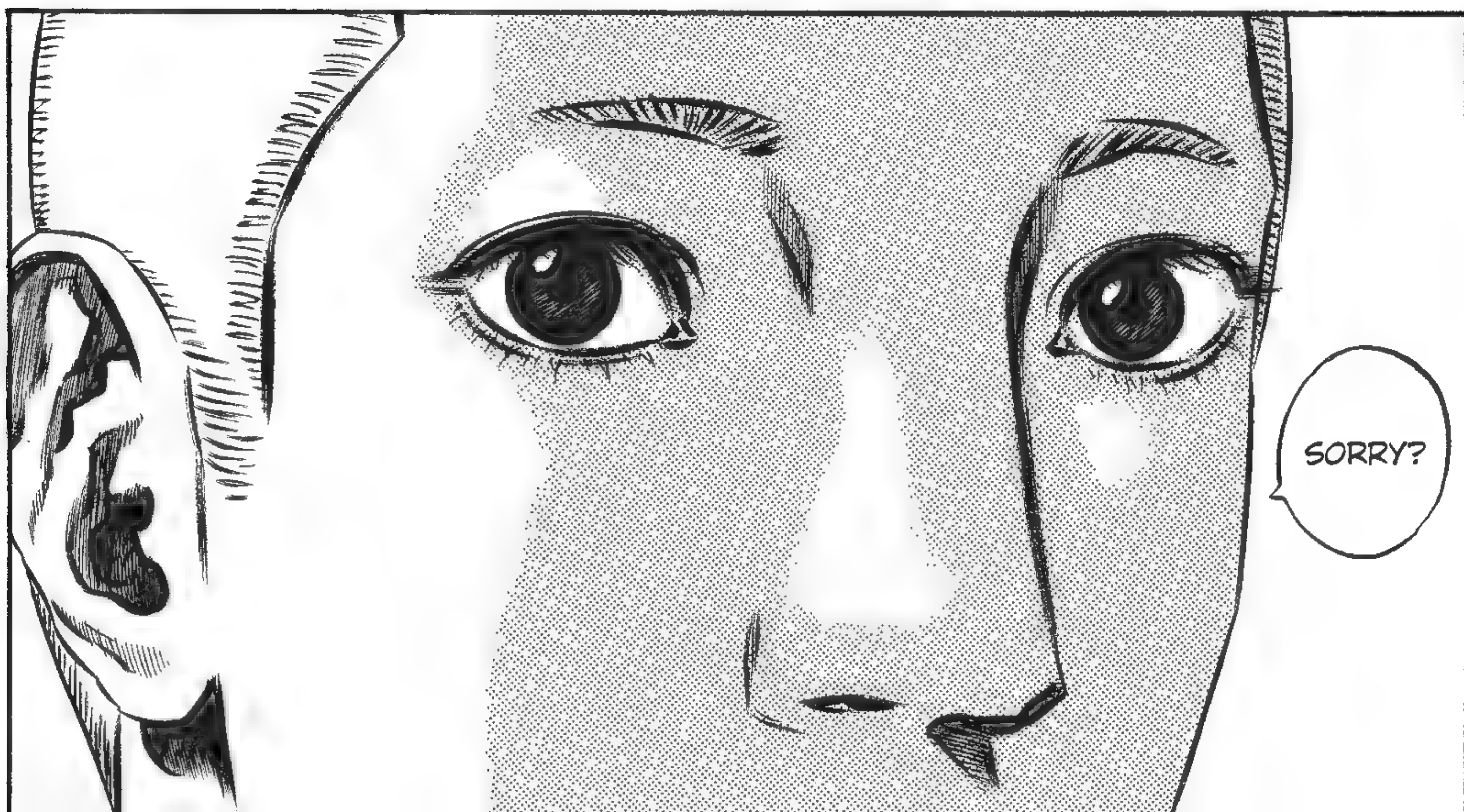


!












NOTHING  
BAD  
HAPPENED...  
EVER.








NO ONE CARED  
ABOUT ME. NO ONE  
PAID ATTENTION TO  
ME. NO ONE EVEN  
LOOKED AT ME.

I JUST...  
WASN'T  
SPECIAL.

LIKE A  
REGULAR  
MR.  
CELLOPHANE.

NOTHING OF  
SUBSTANCE  
TO HIM.





EVERY NOW AND  
THEN, SOMEONE'S  
GAZE WOULD SWEEP  
ME OVER BY CHANCE,  
BUT I COULD FEEL  
THEIR DISINTEREST  
LIKE A KNIFE IN  
THE GUT.



IT WAS LIKE  
EVERYONE I  
PASSED WAS  
SILENTLY  
LAUGHING  
AT ME.



SO, OVER  
TIME, I  
STARTED  
LOOKING  
DOWN TO  
HIDE MY  
FACE.

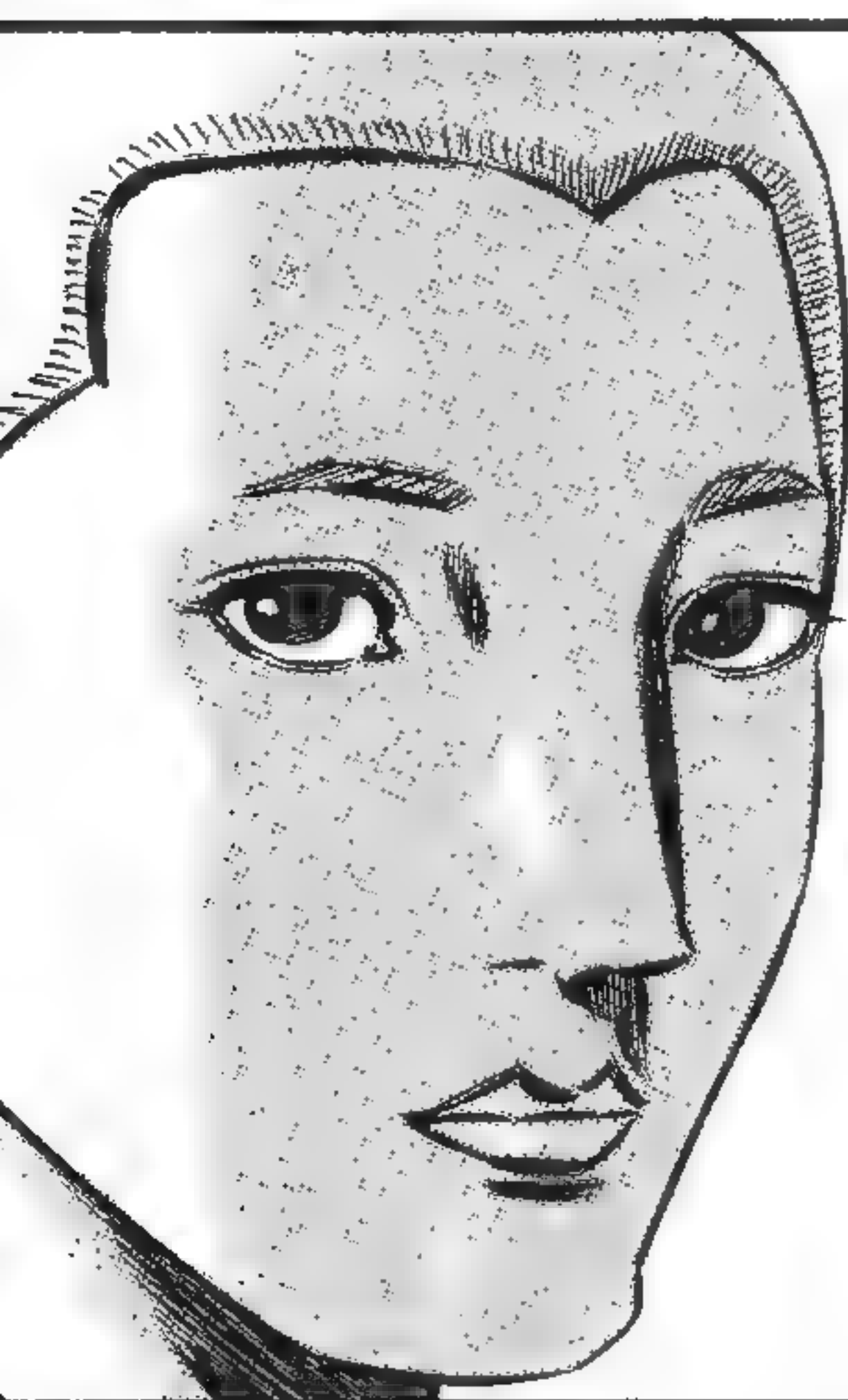
I WALKED  
WITH MY  
EYES ON THE  
GROUND,  
SHUTTING  
OTHER PEOPLE  
OUT.





STARING  
DOWN AT HIS  
OWN TWO FEET,  
DAY AFTER  
DAY.

THAT'S ALL  
I WAS. JUST  
SOME GLOOMY  
LOSER...



TRAUMA?  
I WASN'T  
INTERESTING  
ENOUGH TO  
HAVE TRAUMA.  
I FELT NOTH-  
ING, GOOD  
OR BAD.




NO WONDER  
I DIDN'T FEEL  
REAL.

HMPH. OF  
COURSE  
NOTHING  
"HAPPENED."









AND  
WANDERED LIKE  
A LOST SOUL,  
ISOLATED IN  
A VOID OF MY  
OWN MAKING...

I KEPT  
MY GAZE  
GLUED TO THE  
GROUND OUT  
OF FEAR...



I WAS JUST  
A JEALOUS  
HAVE-NOT  
STEWING  
IN SILENT  
VITRIOL.

GLANCING  
UP OCCASIONALLY  
ONLY TO GLARE  
AT THE HAVES.  
THE ONES WITH  
LOVE, ACCLAIM,  
POPULARITY,  
FAME...



THE MORE ONE  
OF THE HAVES  
GUSHED ABOUT "INNER  
BEAUTY," THE MORE  
INSULTS I THREW AT  
THEM IN MY HEAD.  
DAMN HYPOCRITES,  
THINKING THEY'RE  
BETTER THAN  
ME OVER A FEW  
MILLIMETERS.









!

ON MY  
FACE.

I BLAMED  
THE  
EMPTINESS  
I FELT...



PEOPLE  
WOULD PAY  
ATTENTION  
TO ME. I'D BE  
POPULAR.  
EVERYTHING  
WOULD FINALLY  
BE REAL.

I THOUGHT  
IF I WAS MORE  
ATTRACTIVE,  
I'D BE ABLE TO  
WALK WITH MY  
HEAD HELD  
HIGH.





OF  
COURSE  
I DID.



SO YOU  
THOUGHT A  
NEW FACE  
WOULD  
BRING YOU  
FULFILL-  
MENT?



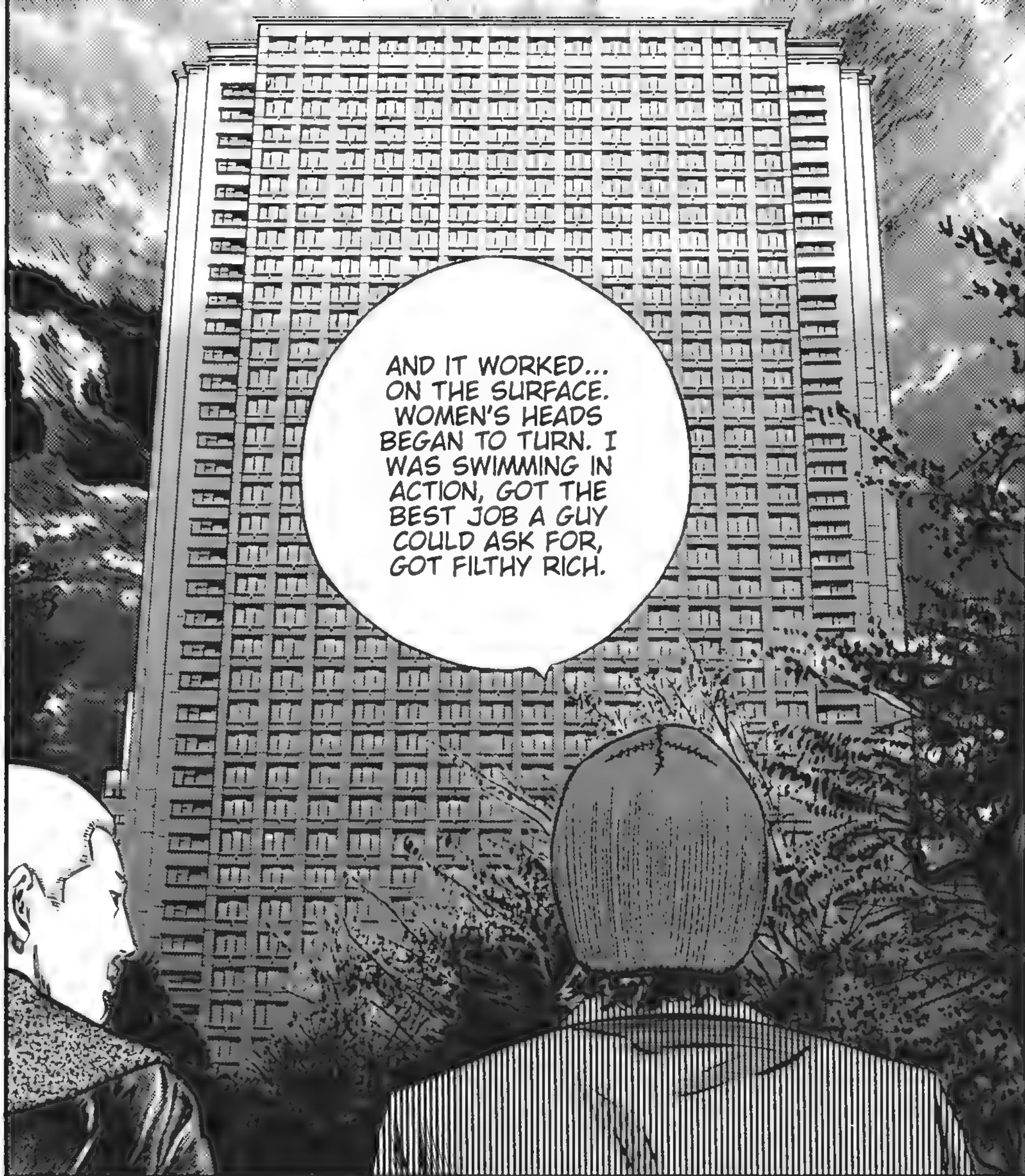
YEAH.



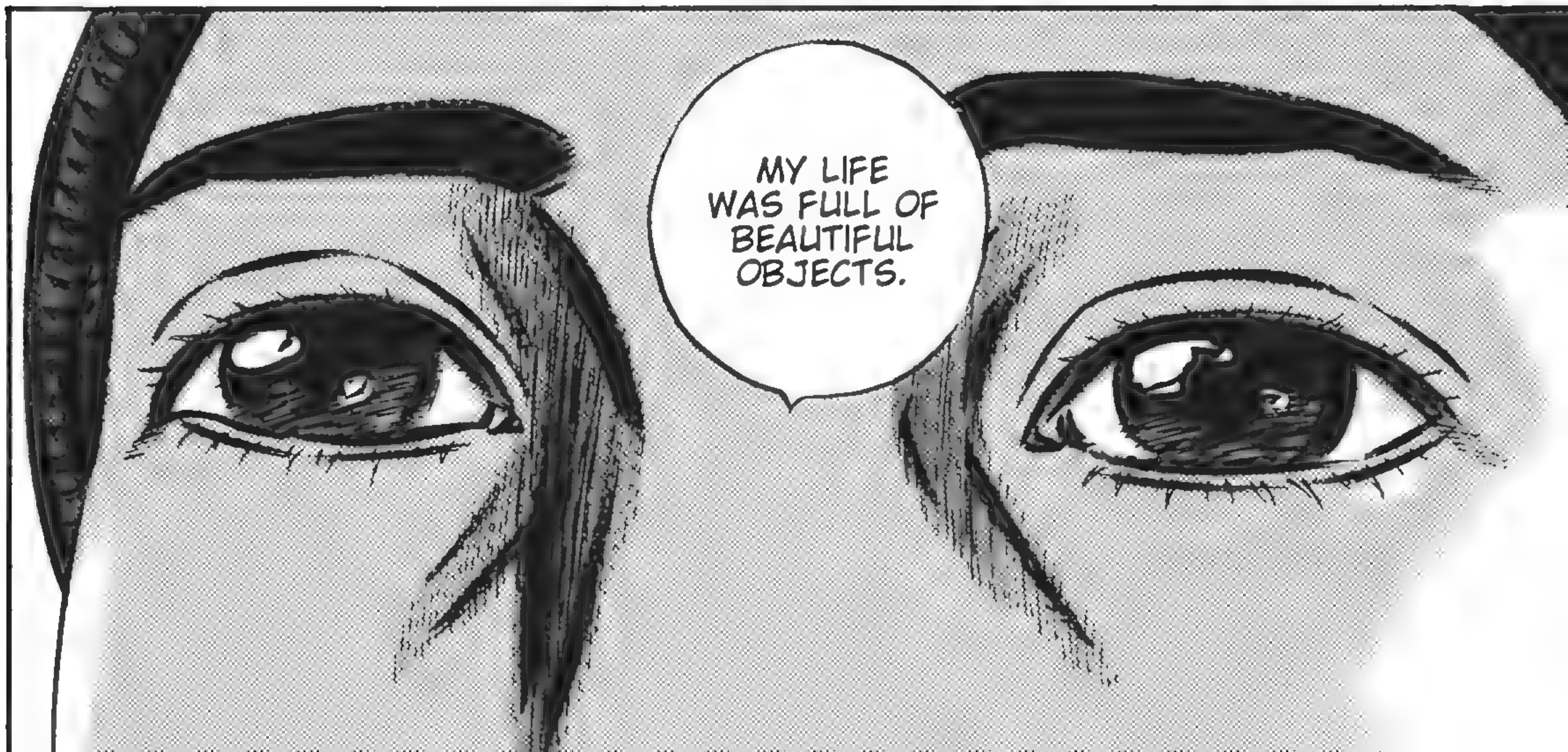
SO YOU  
BOUGHT  
YOURSELF  
ONE.





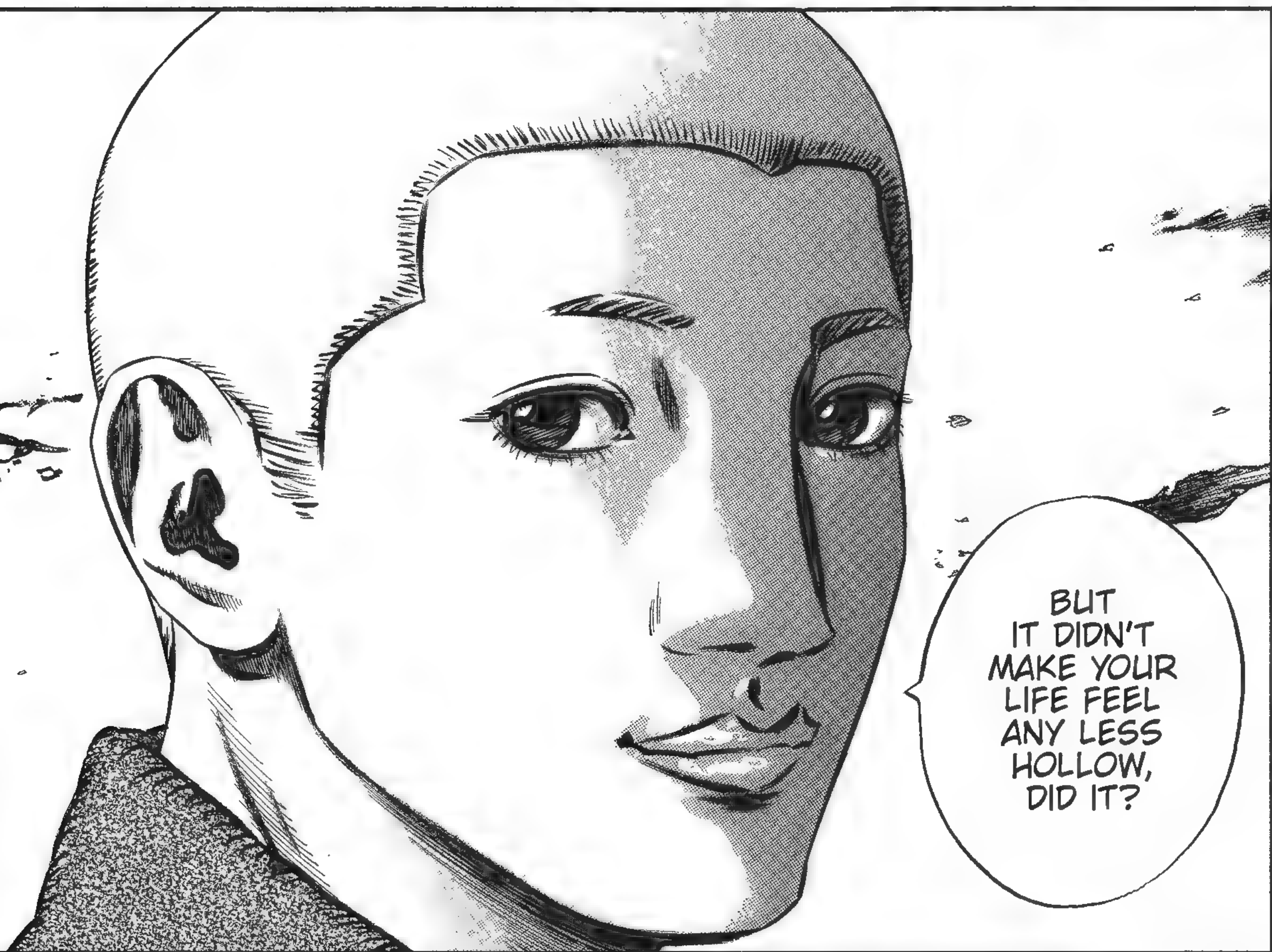


AND IT WORKED...  
ON THE SURFACE.  
WOMEN'S HEADS  
BEGAN TO TURN. I  
WAS SWIMMING IN  
ACTION, GOT THE  
BEST JOB A GUY  
COULD ASK FOR,  
GOT FILTHY RICH.



MY LIFE  
WAS FULL OF  
BEAUTIFUL  
OBJECTS.





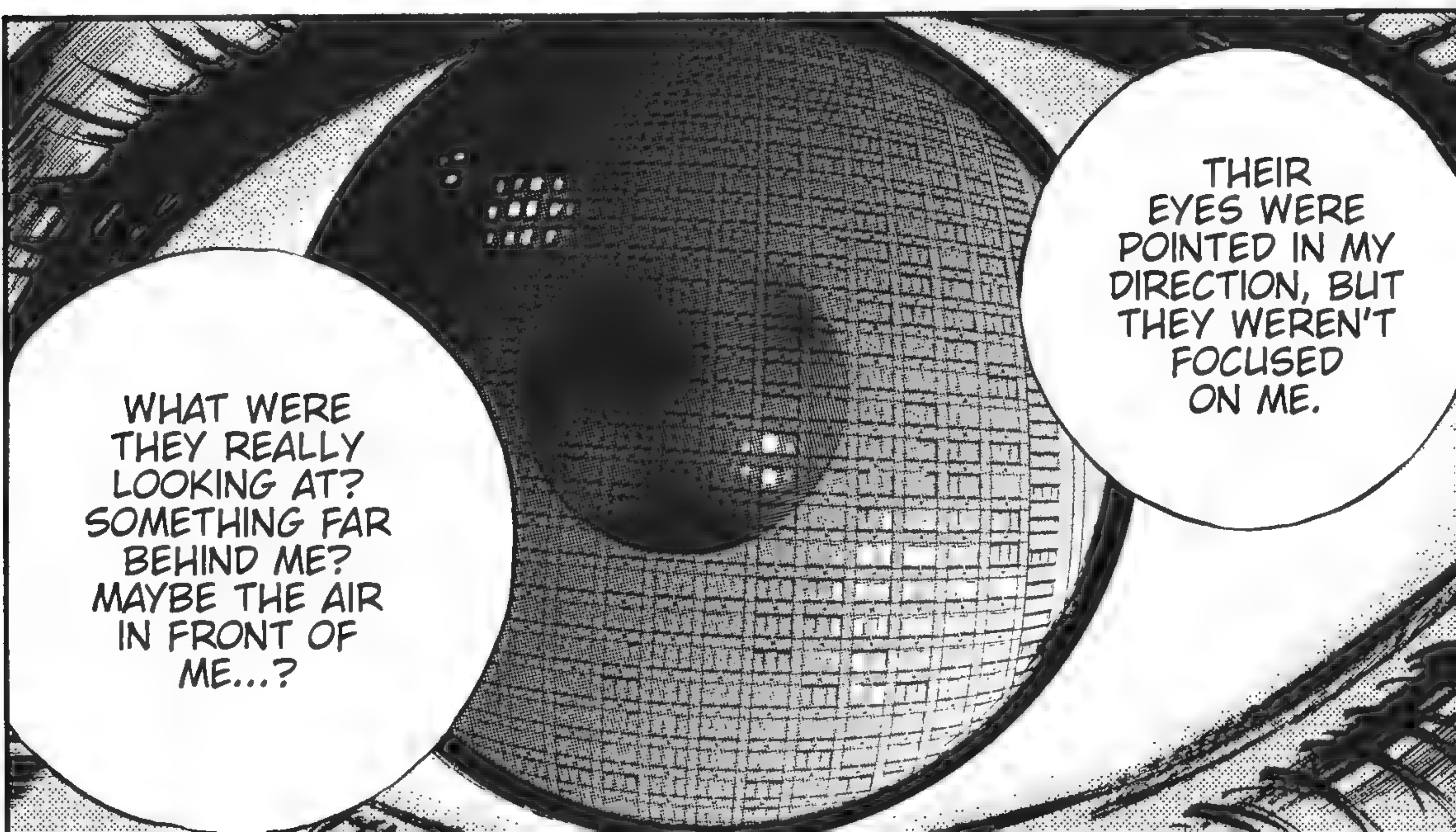




ANY TIME  
I KISSED A  
WOMAN, I  
COULDN'T TELL  
IF THEY WERE  
KISSING ME.

THEY DIDN'T  
TOUCH ME LIKE  
A PERSON. THEY  
HANDLED ME LIKE  
SOME KINDA  
BRAND-NAME  
OBJECT.

EVEN OTHERS'  
KINDNESS WASN'T  
AIMED AT ME. IT  
WAS LIKE THEY  
WERE WHISPERING  
SWEET NOTHINGS  
STRAIGHT INTO  
MY WALLET.



WHAT WERE  
THEY REALLY  
LOOKING AT?  
SOMETHING FAR  
BEHIND ME?  
MAYBE THE AIR  
IN FRONT OF  
ME...?

THEIR  
EYES WERE  
POINTED IN MY  
DIRECTION, BUT  
THEY WEREN'T  
FOCUSED  
ON ME.





HONESTLY,  
I'M NOT  
SURE THEY  
EVEN KNEW  
I EXISTED.



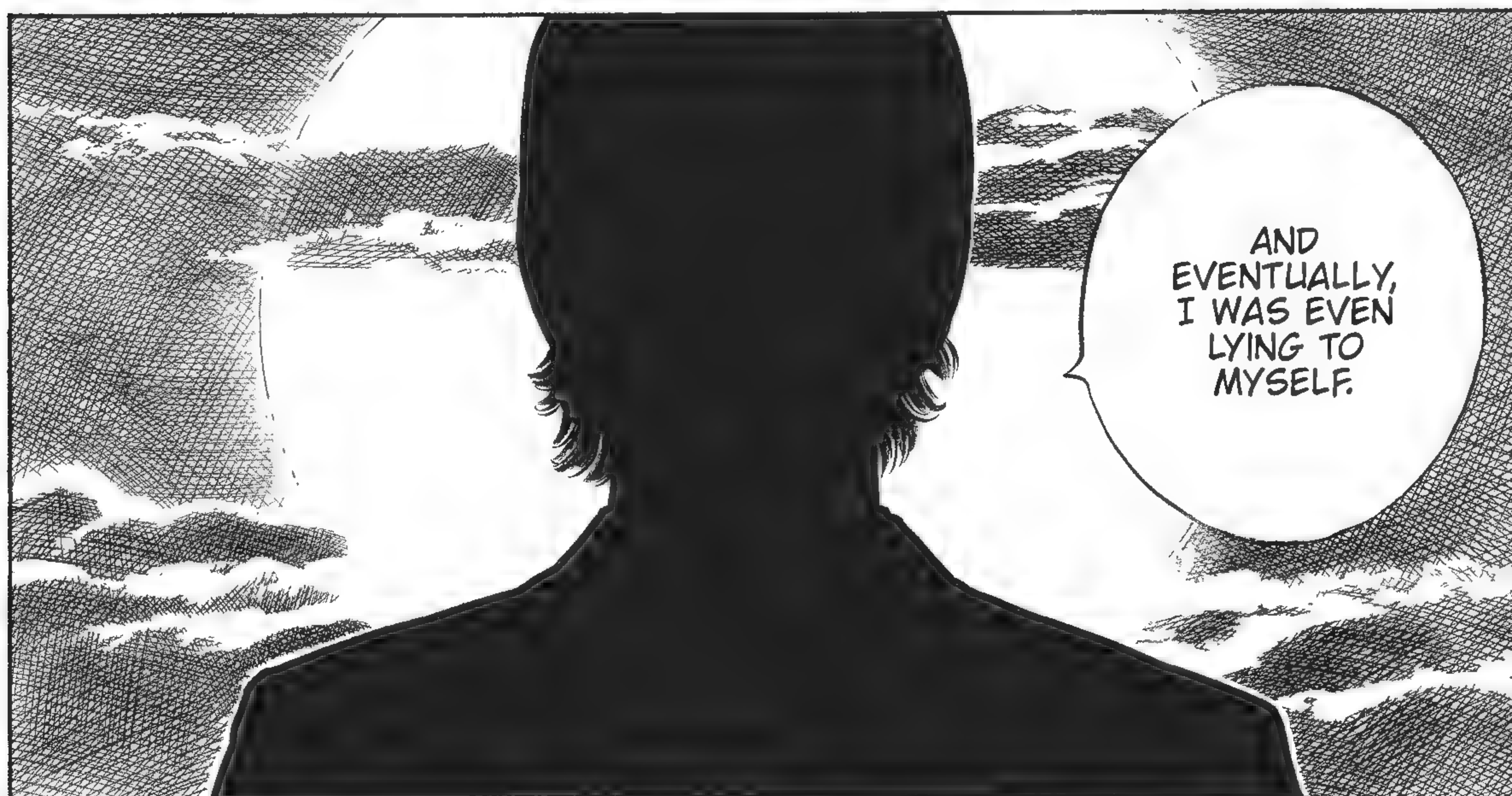
FUCKERS  
ACTED LIKE  
I WAS  
INVISIBLE!



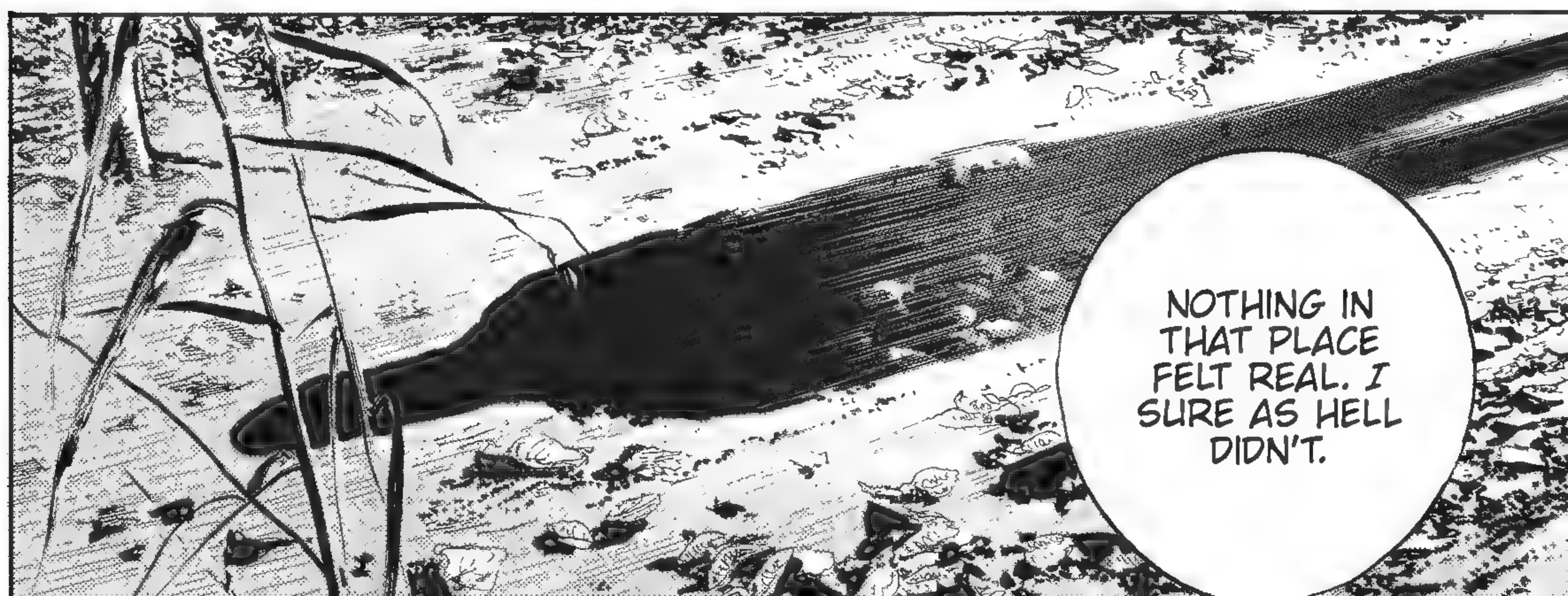


BEFORE I  
KNEW IT,  
I WAS A  
HABITUAL  
LIAR.

AFTER A  
FEW YEARS  
OF THAT, I  
STARTED  
DOUBTING MY  
OWN EYES.



AND  
EVENTUALLY,  
I WAS EVEN  
LYING TO  
MYSELF.



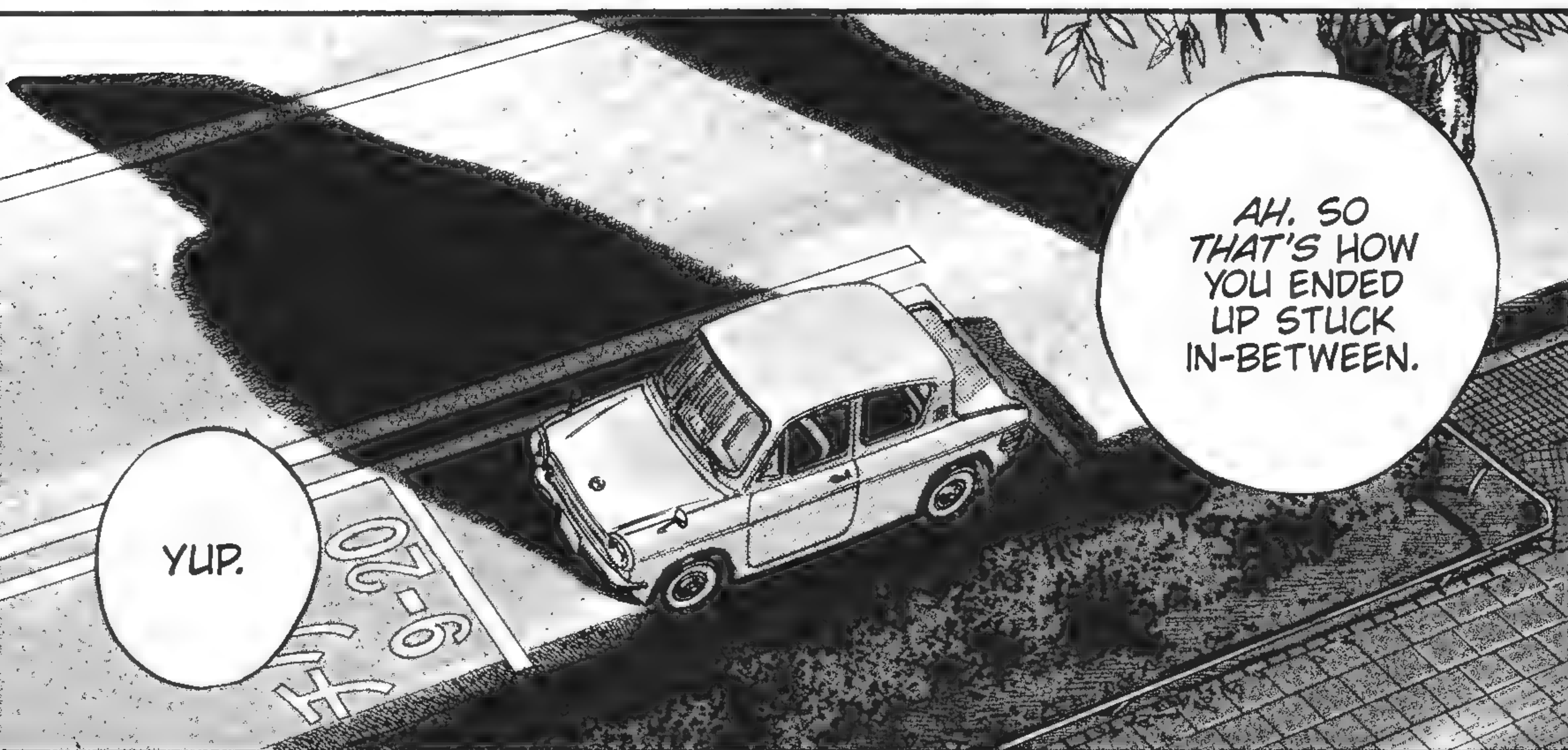
NOTHING IN  
THAT PLACE  
FELT REAL. I  
SURE AS HELL  
DIDN'T.





I HAD TO  
CAST IT ALL  
ASIDE AND  
RUN FAR  
AWAY.

SO I PANICKED.  
GOT RID OF  
EVERYTHING--  
THE MONEY,  
THE MATERIAL  
SHIT, THE FANCY  
APARTMENT...



AH. SO  
THAT'S HOW  
YOU ENDED  
UP STUCK  
IN-BETWEEN.

YUP.



SINCE  
IT'S AT-  
TACHED  
AND ALL.

WELL,  
YES.  
THAT'D  
BE  
TOUGH.




BUT I STILL  
COULDN'T  
LOSE THIS  
DAMN FACE.






SO, IN  
SUM...



ONLY TO  
DISCOVER THAT  
THE LIFE YOU  
THOUGHT YOU  
WANTED WAS  
HOLLOW AND  
FULL OF LIES.  
CORRECT?

YOU MADE  
YOURSELF  
HOTTER AND  
GOT THE AT-  
TENTION YOU  
CRAVED...



NO ONE IN  
THAT WORLD  
EVER REALLY  
LOOKED AT  
ME.

I WAS JUST  
AS GLOOMY  
AND ALONE AS  
I WAS WHEN  
MY EYES WERE  
GLUED TO THE  
GROUND.



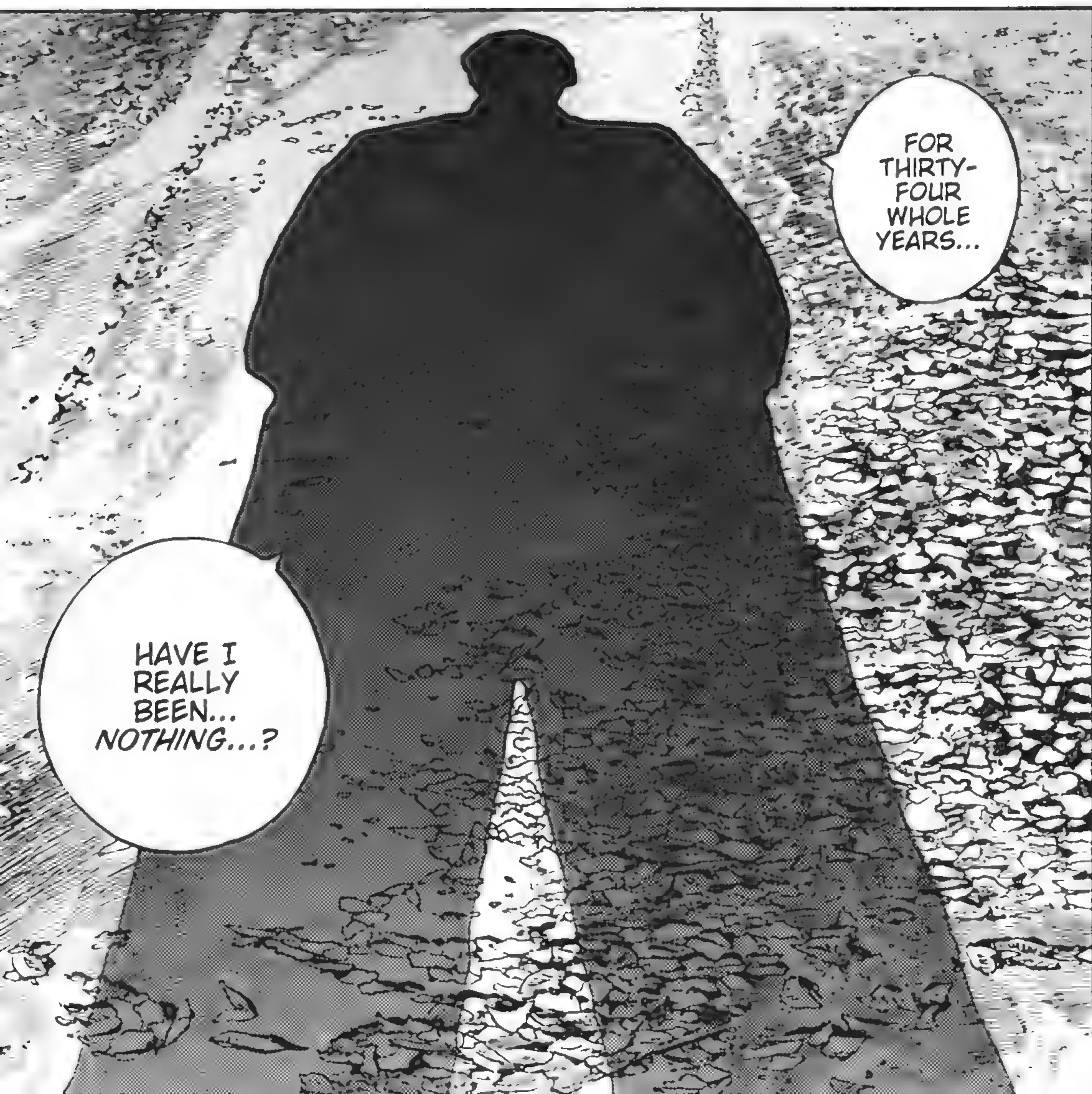
YEAH.





I'VE GOT  
NOTHING  
NOW.

I HAD  
NOTHING  
THEN.



HAVE I  
REALLY  
BEEN...  
NOTHING...?

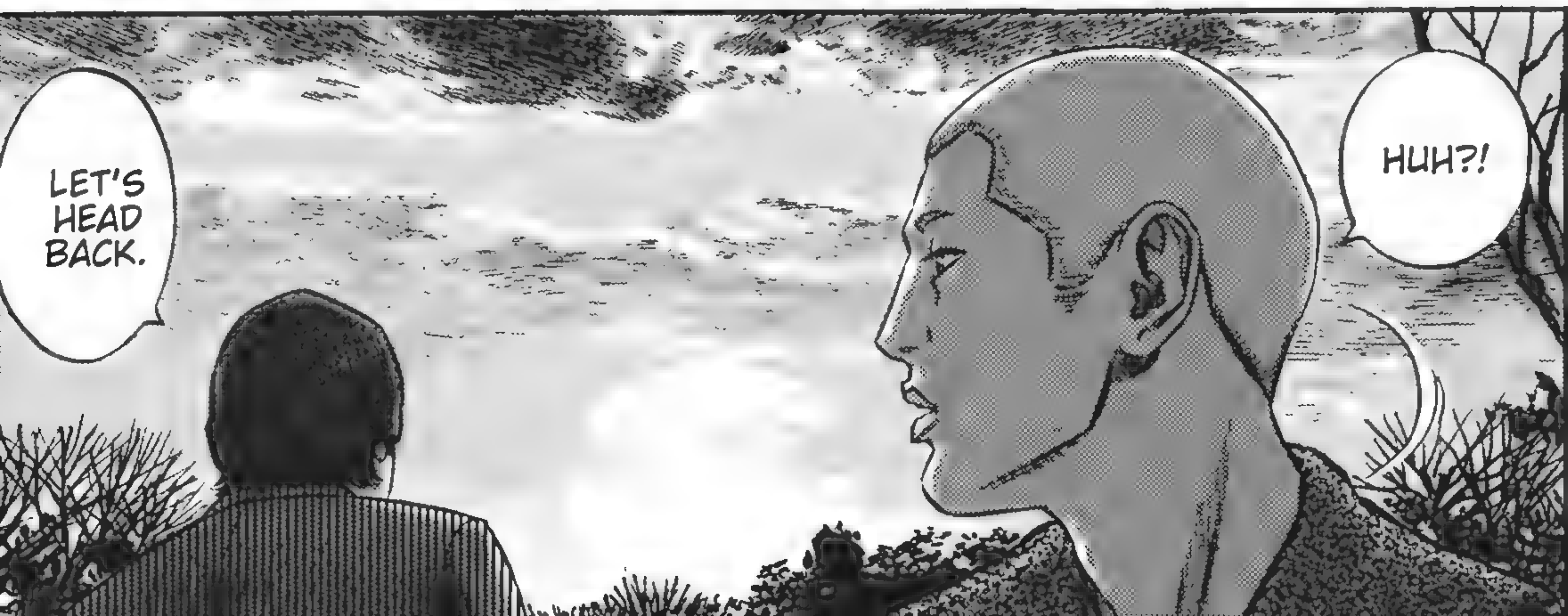
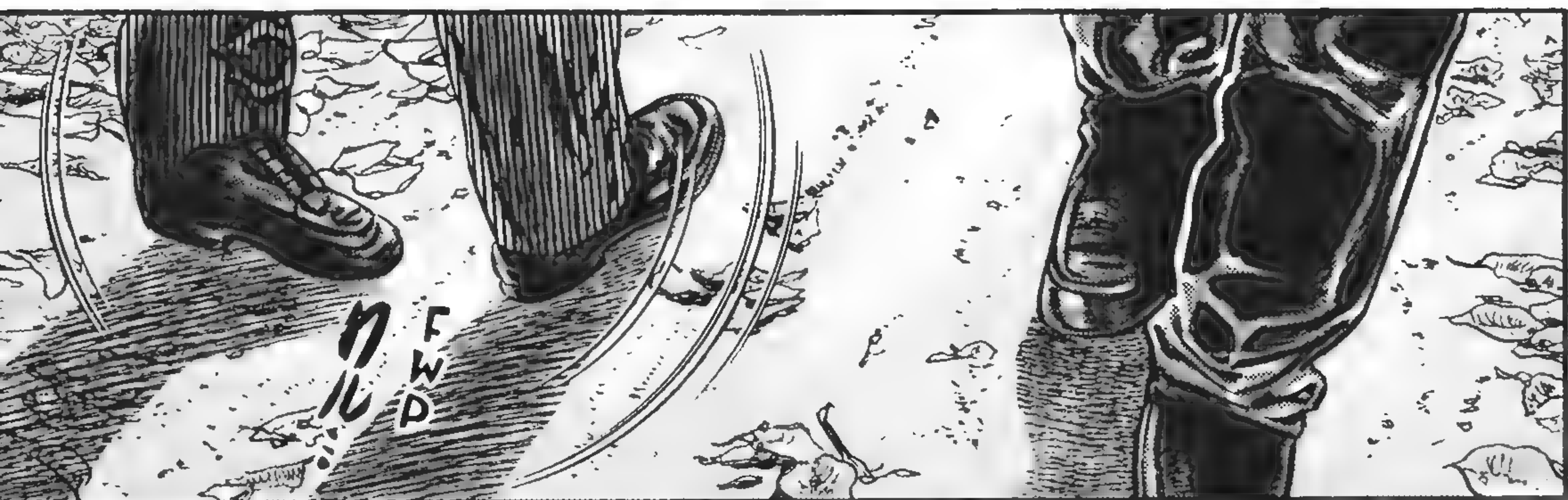
FOR  
THIRTY-  
FOUR  
WHOLE  
YEARS...




WHERE  
DO I HAVE  
TO GO TO  
FIND *ME*?











I'M SICK  
OF STARING  
AT MY OWN  
SHADOW.





YOU KNOW,  
THERE WAS  
A MOMENT...





!!

ONE  
FLEETING  
MOMENT  
WHERE  
I FELT  
REAL.





REALLY?  
WHEN?



WELL...  
I THOUGHT  
ABOUT  
SURGERY  
FOR  
MONTHS.

BUT I KEPT  
GOING BACK  
AND FORTH  
ON IT...



AND JUST  
WHEN I WAS  
TRYING TO  
WORK OUT  
WHO I WAS...

NOT SURE  
IF I COULD  
THROW AWAY  
THE FACE I'D  
HAD OR THE  
PERSON I'D  
BEEN FOR  
SO LONG.

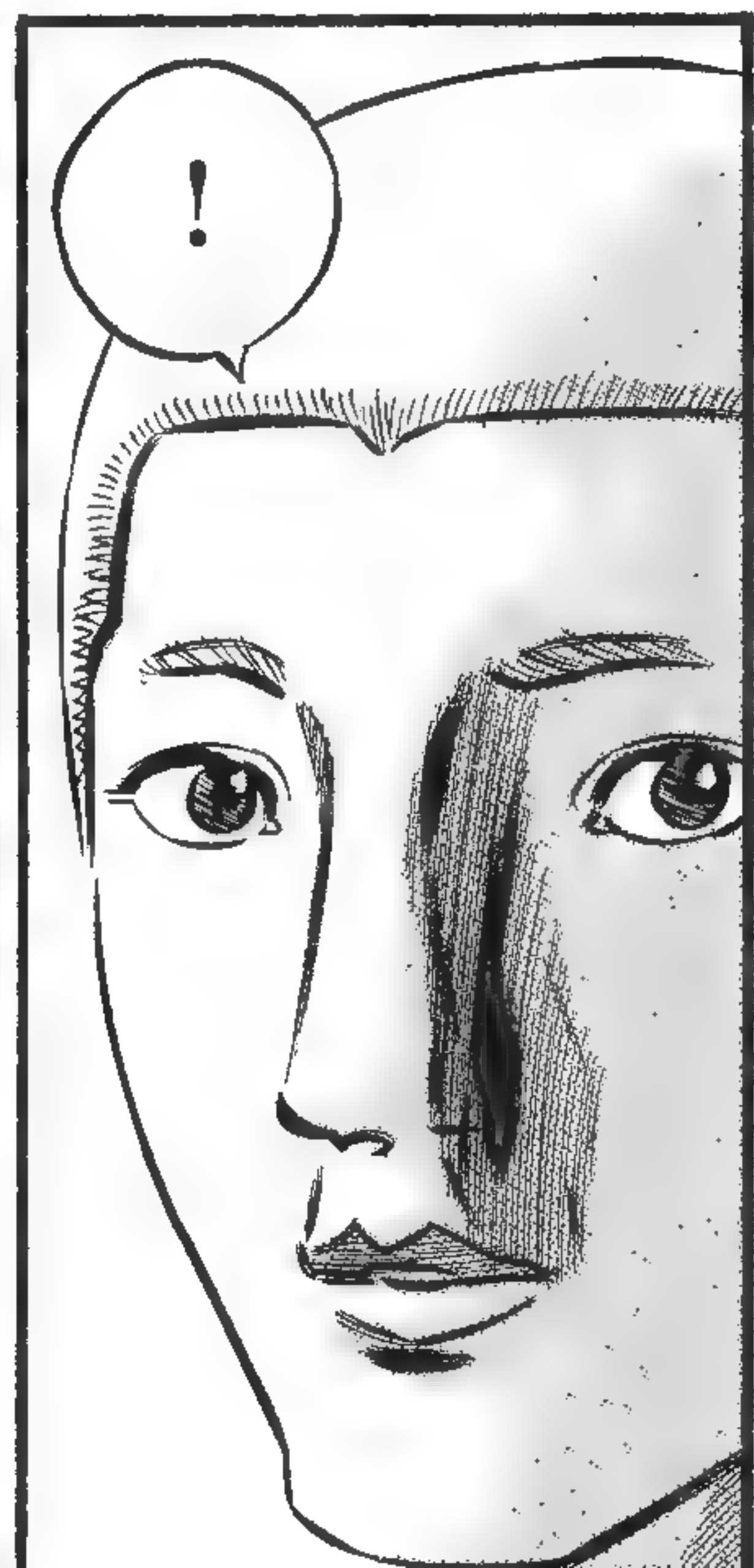




A PERSON  
WHO REALLY  
SAW ME  
APPEARED.



I WAS UGLY  
AND GLOOMY, MY  
HEAD HANGING  
DOWN...YET SHE  
WAS KIND ENOUGH  
TO ACTUALLY  
LOOK AT ME.





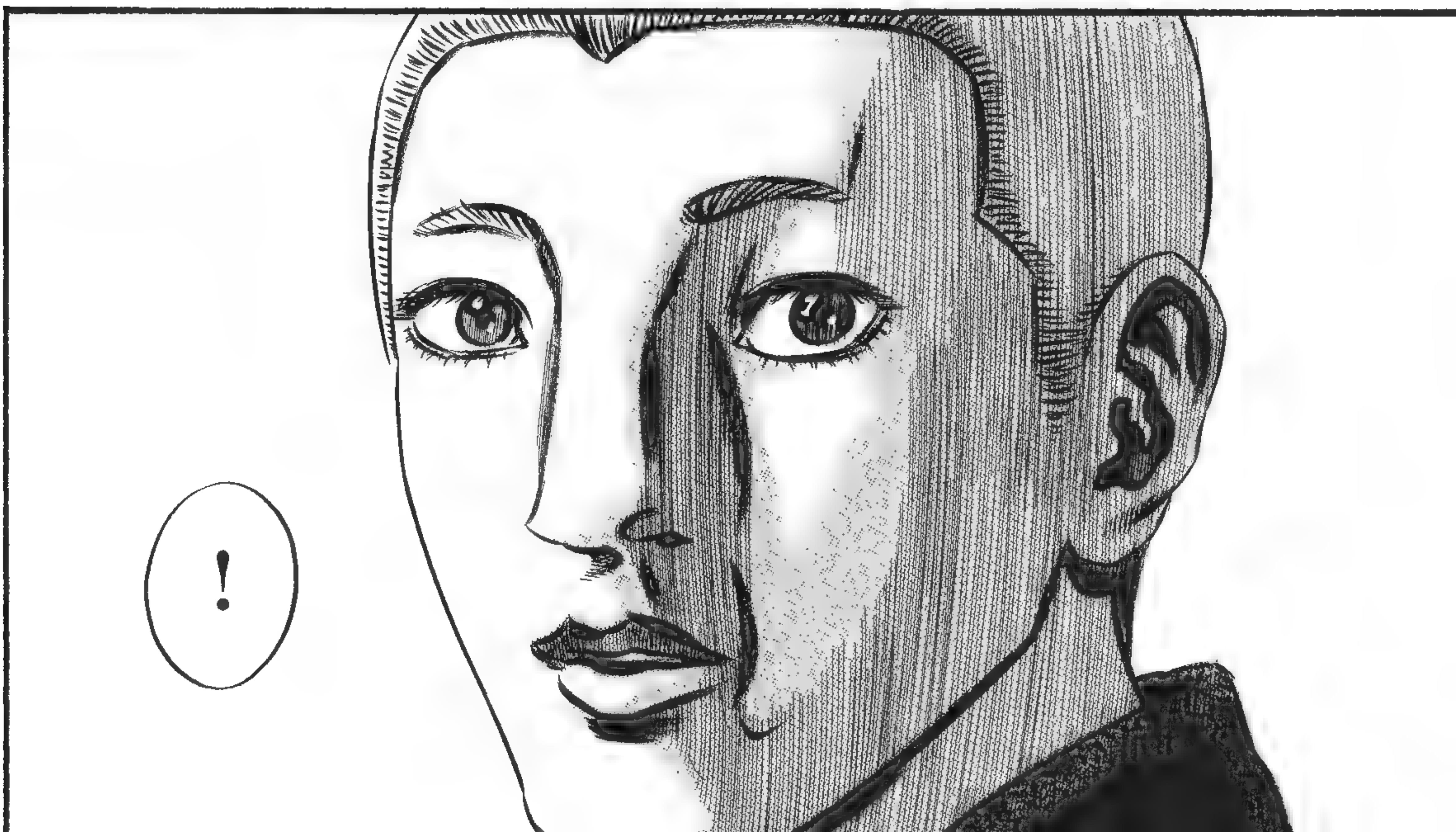


AND IN THAT  
MOMENT...I  
WAS REAL.













YUP.

YOU KNEW  
A WOMAN  
WHO COULD  
SEE WHAT  
YOU SEE  
NOW?









YEAH.

FOR  
THREE  
WHOLE  
MONTHS...

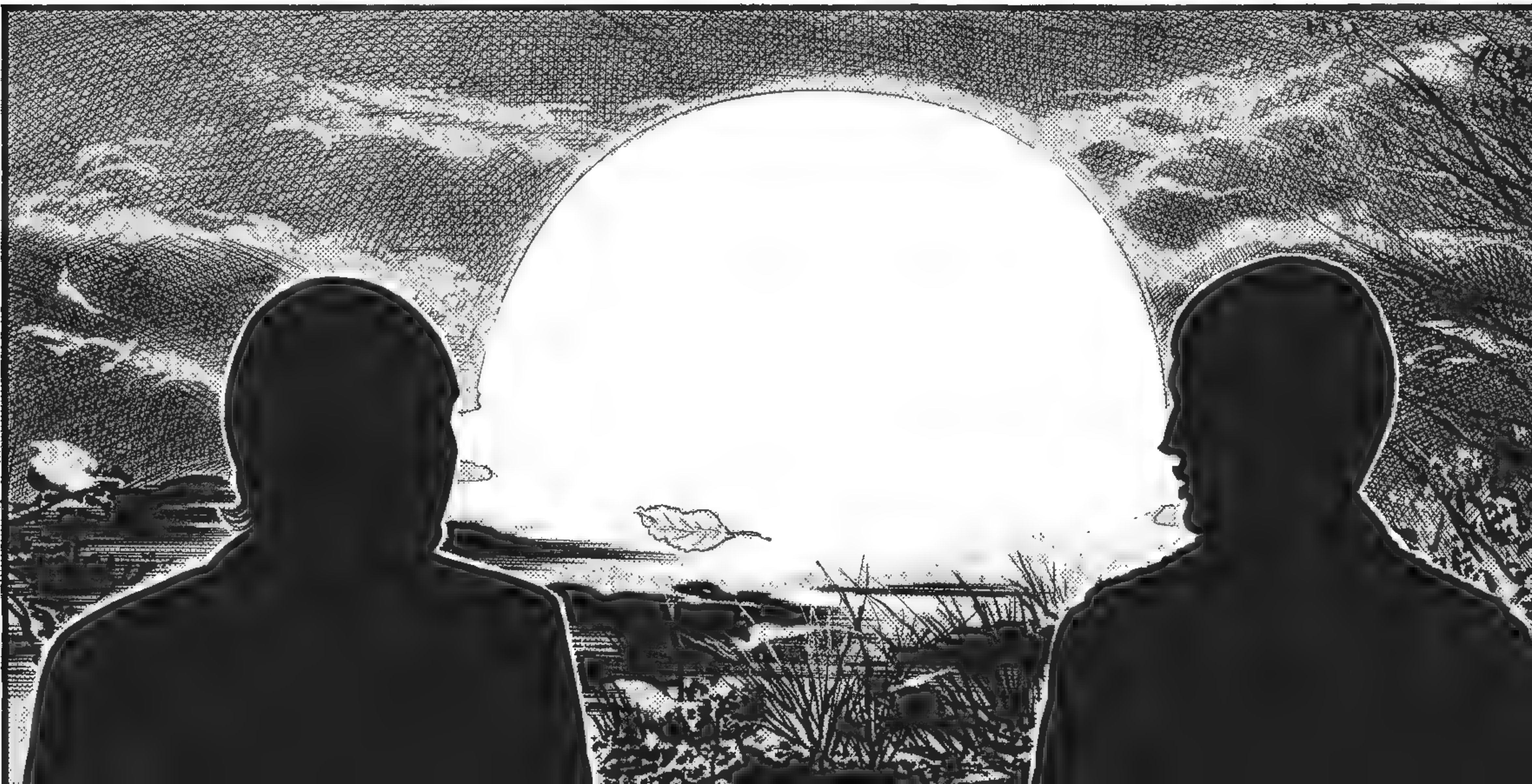
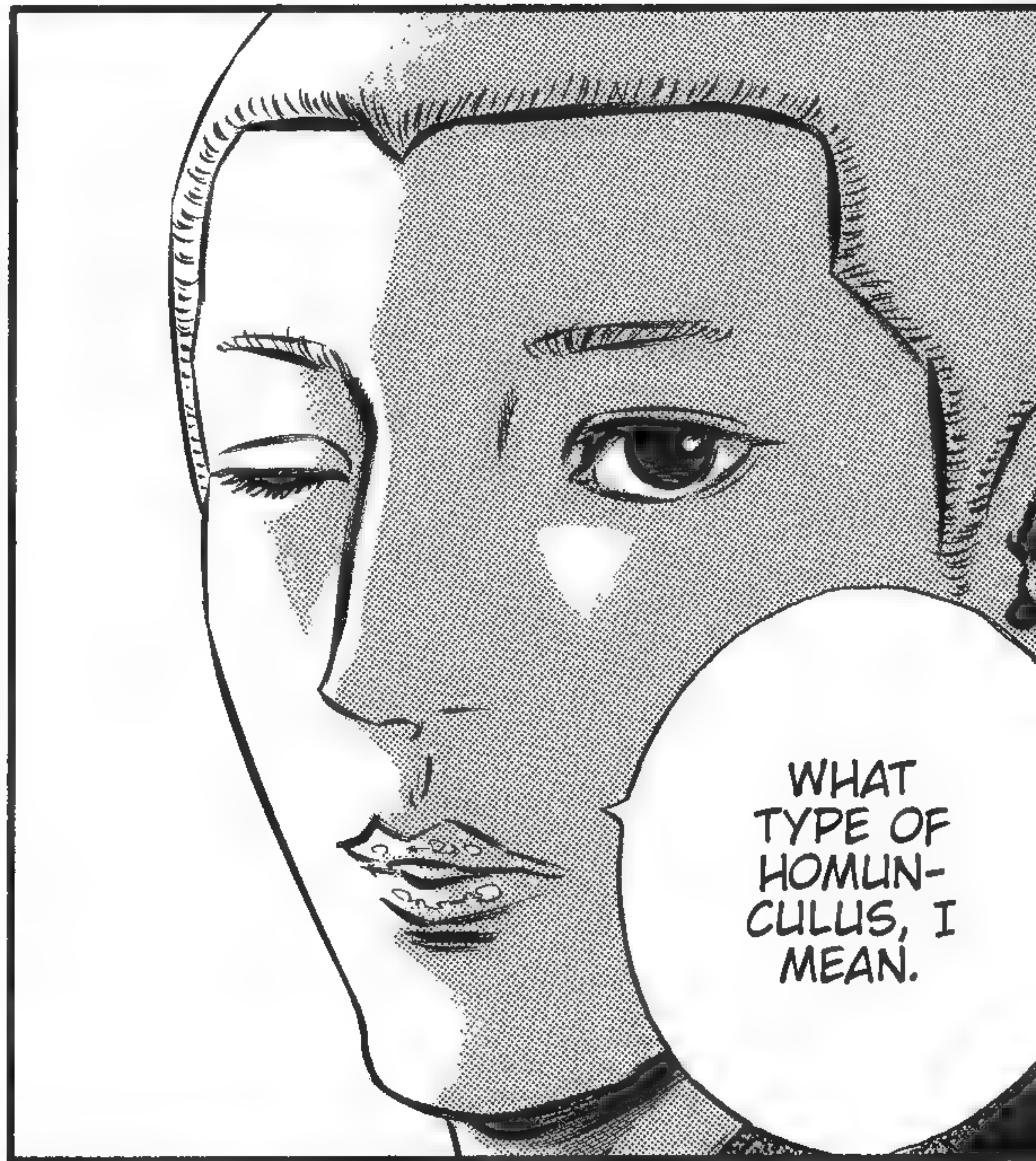


WERE  
YOU TWO  
ROMANTICALLY  
INVOLVED?



SHE  
STAYED BY  
MY SIDE...  
AND MADE  
ME VISIBLE.









ACTUALLY  
...



LET ME GUESS.  
CYBORG ARM  
AND SANDY  
FEET?

GRIN



BACK  
THEN, SHE  
SAID I  
WAS...





AFTER  
ALL THIS,  
YOU'RE  
STILL  
KEEPING  
SECRETS?!

NO  
WAY!



WHA  
?!

NEVER  
MIND.  
IT'S NONE  
OF YOUR  
BUSINESS.



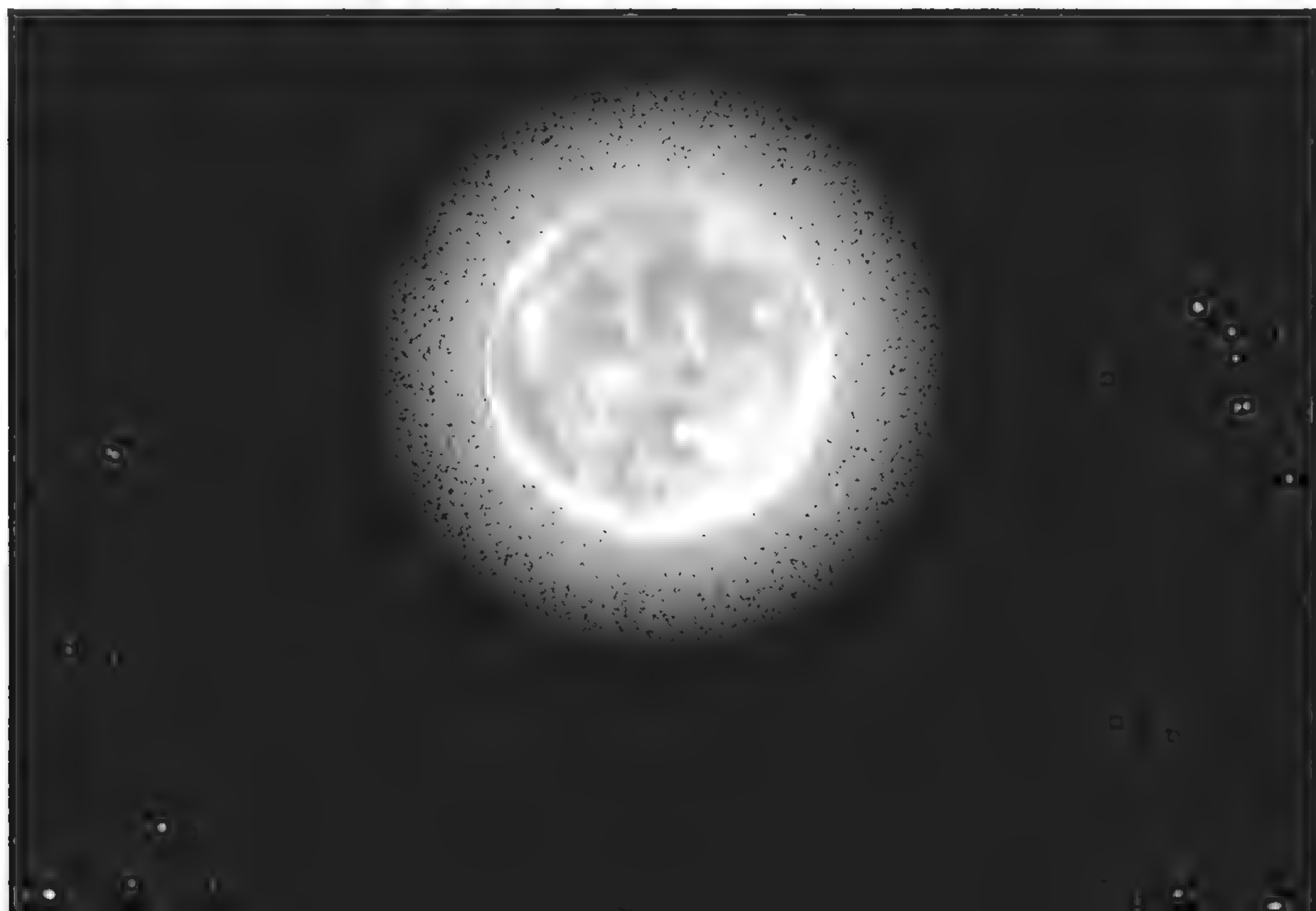
NOPE.

NOT A  
CHANCE.



COME  
ON, SPILL!!  
PRETTY  
PLEASE?  
CHERRY  
ON TOP?





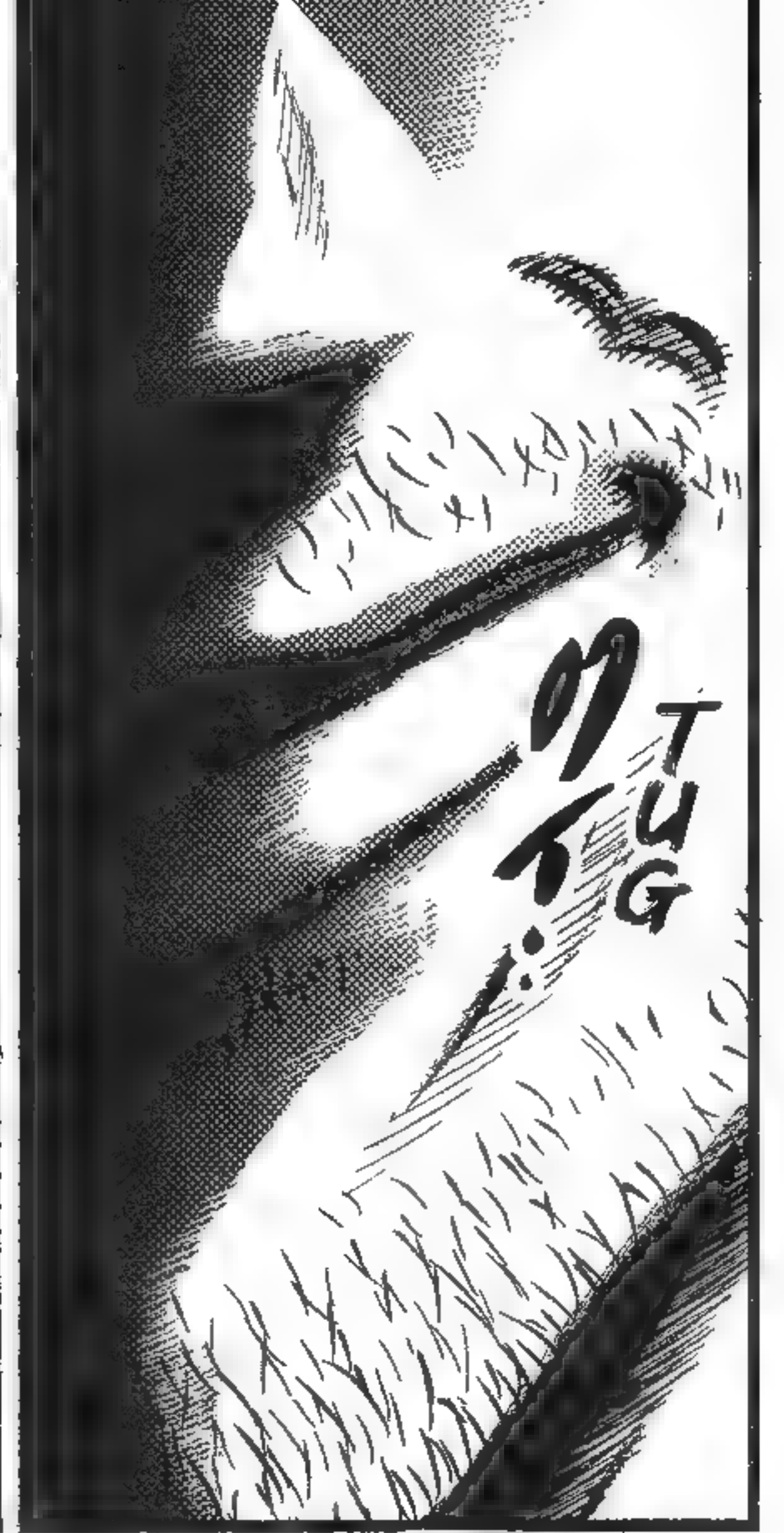




WELL, THANK  
YA KINDLY, CAR  
GUY! FEELIN'  
GENEROUS  
TODAY, EH?

WHOA!  
TWO  
WHOLE  
BOTTLES?













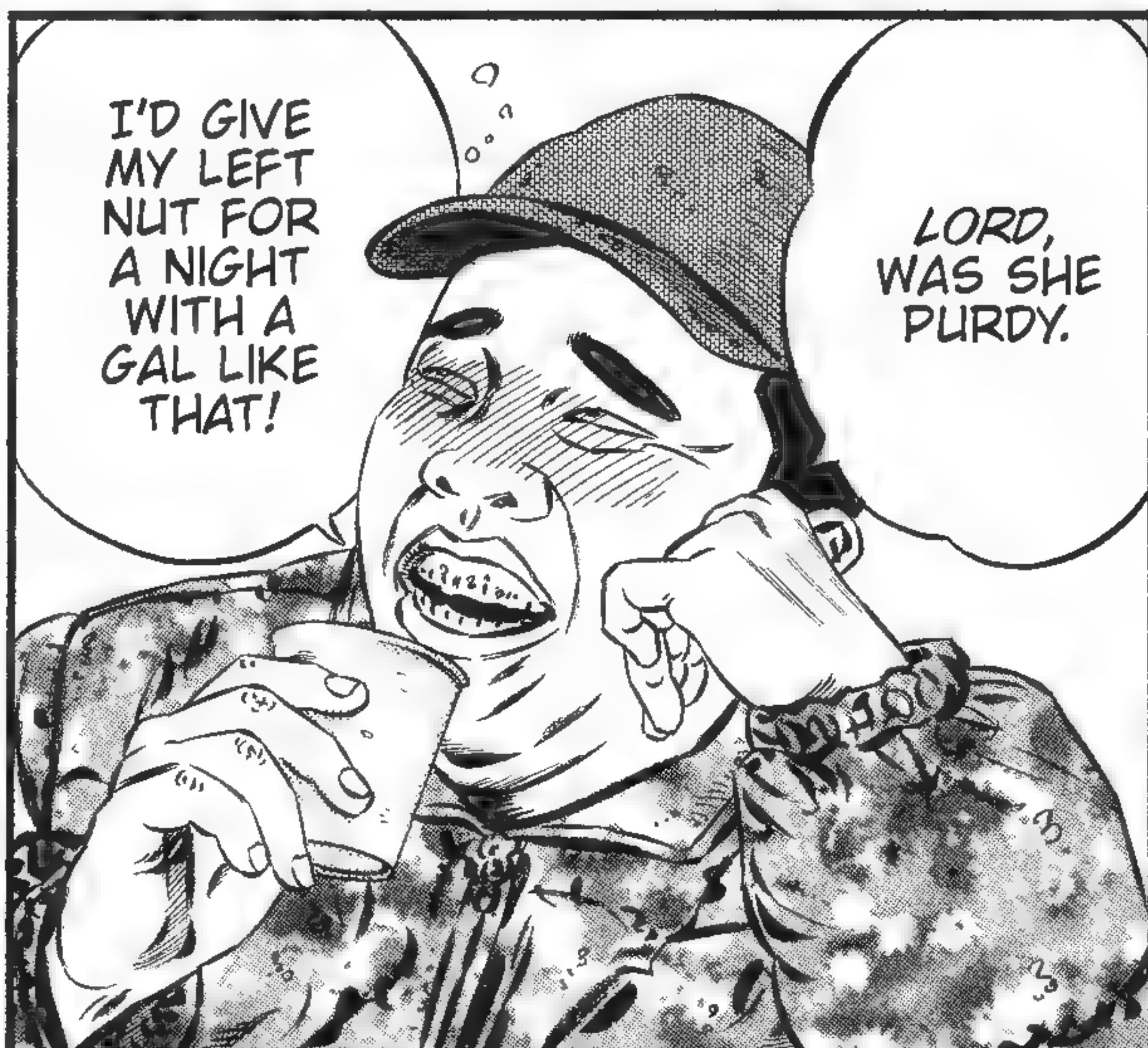
OH, THE  
PONYTAIL  
GIRL?  
YEAH, SHE  
WAS REAL  
CUTE!

THAT  
LI'L DARLIN'  
VOLUNTEERIN'  
AT THE SOUP  
KITCHEN TODAY  
WAS SOMETHIN'  
ELSE, HUH?



IT WAS A  
HELLUVA  
RIDE!

SHOOT, I BEEN  
WITH GIRLS THAT  
CUTE WHEN I  
WAS YOUNGER!  
TWO 'ER THREE  
OF 'EM!



I'D GIVE  
MY LEFT  
NUT FOR  
A NIGHT  
WITH A  
GAL LIKE  
THAT!

LORD,  
WAS SHE  
PURDY.

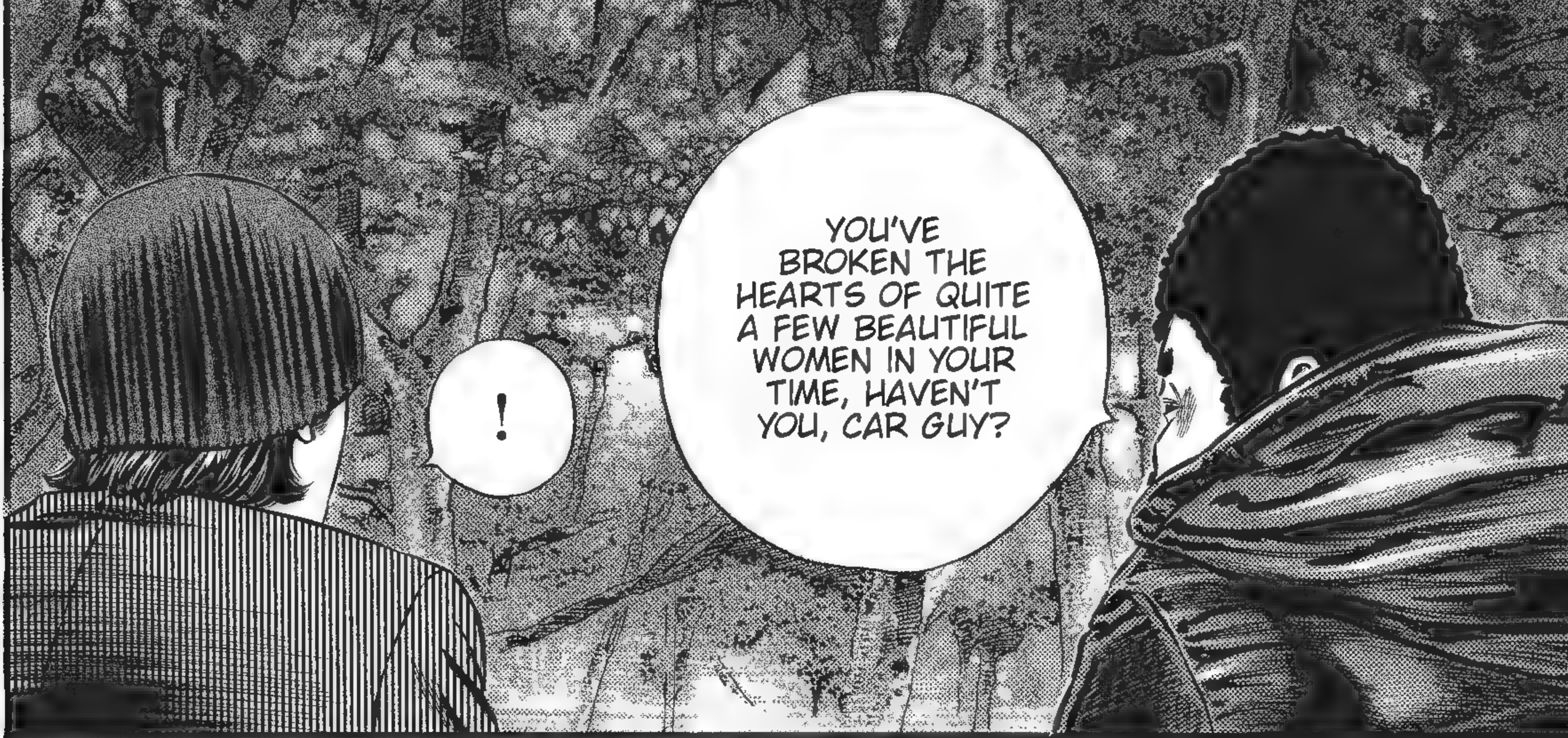


KEH  
KEH  
KEH  
KEH  
KEH!

LIKELY  
STORY.  
IN YER  
DREAMS,  
MAYBE.

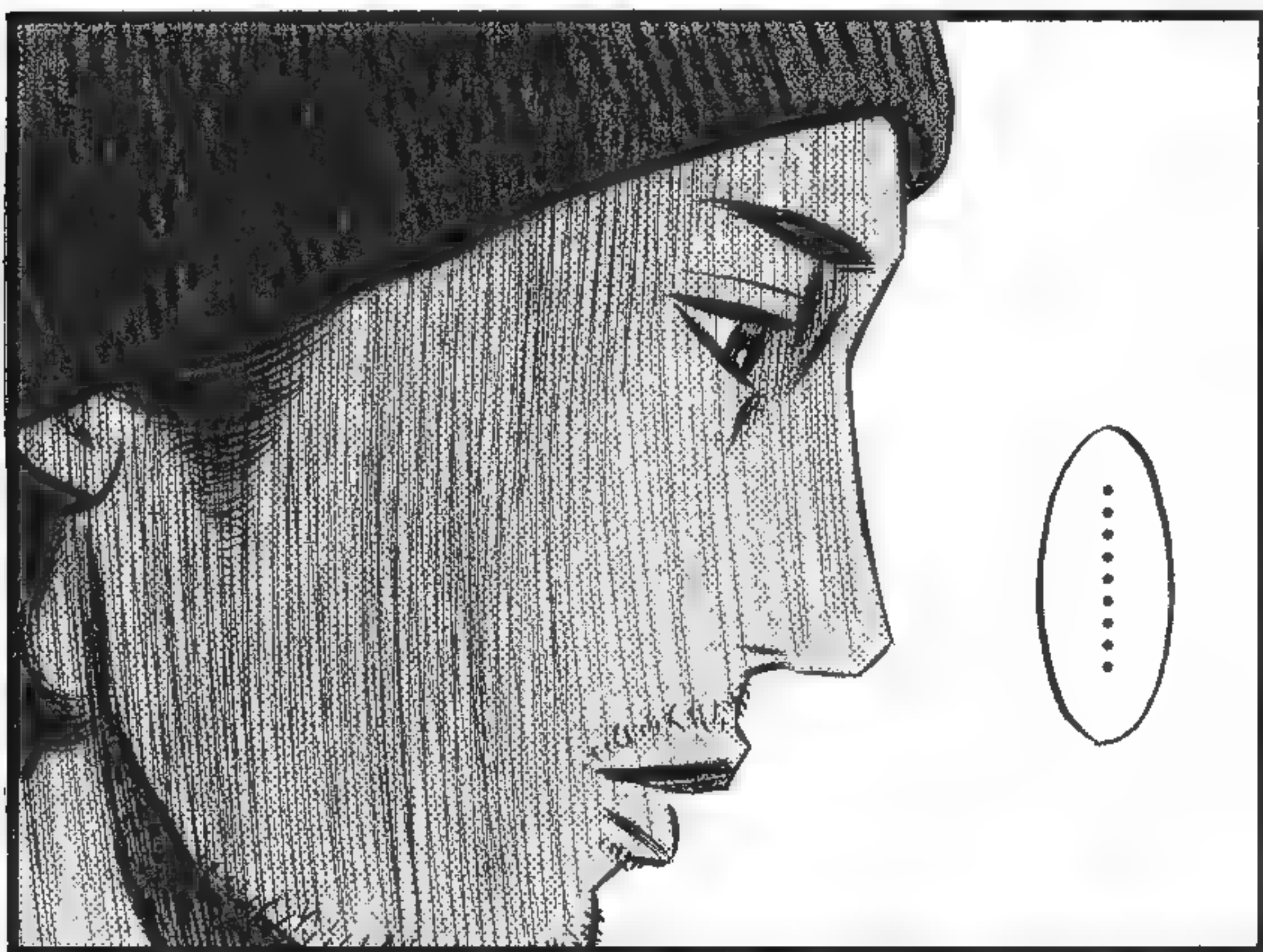
I'M  
SERIOUS!  
THEY WAS  
REAL, I  
TELL YA!





!

YOU'VE  
BROKEN THE  
HEARTS OF QUITE  
A FEW BEAUTIFUL  
WOMEN IN YOUR  
TIME, HAVEN'T  
YOU, CAR GUY?



.....

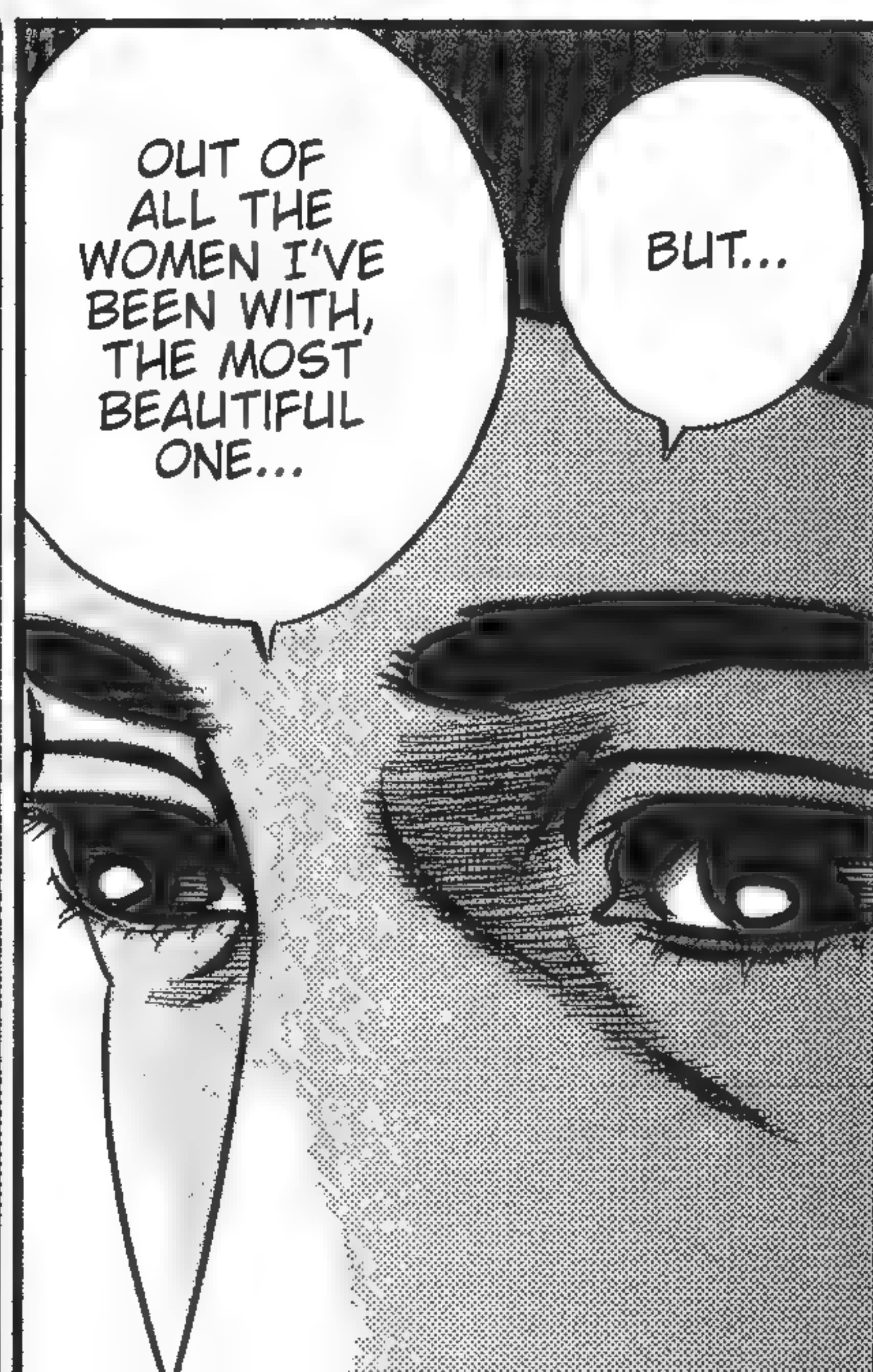
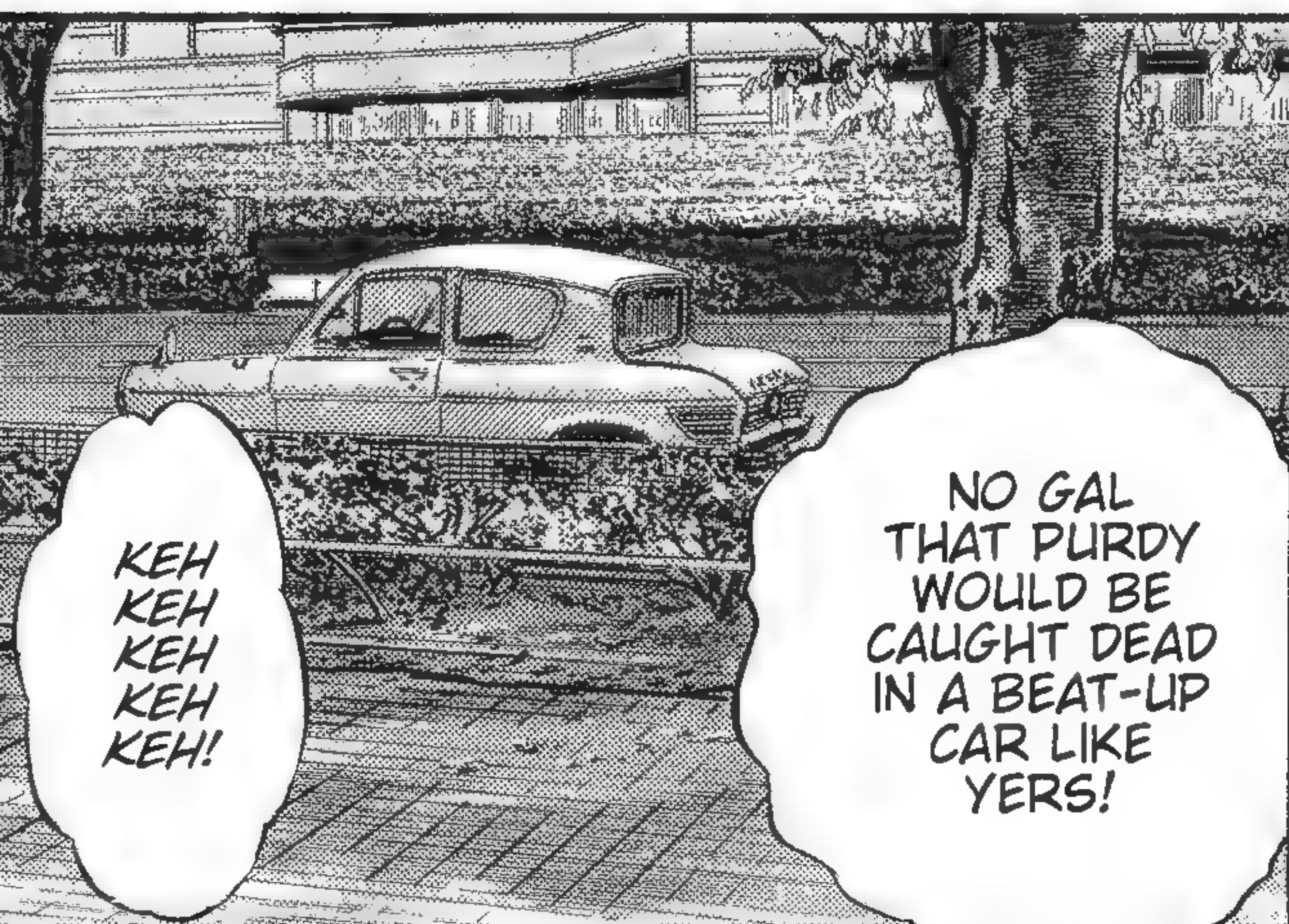
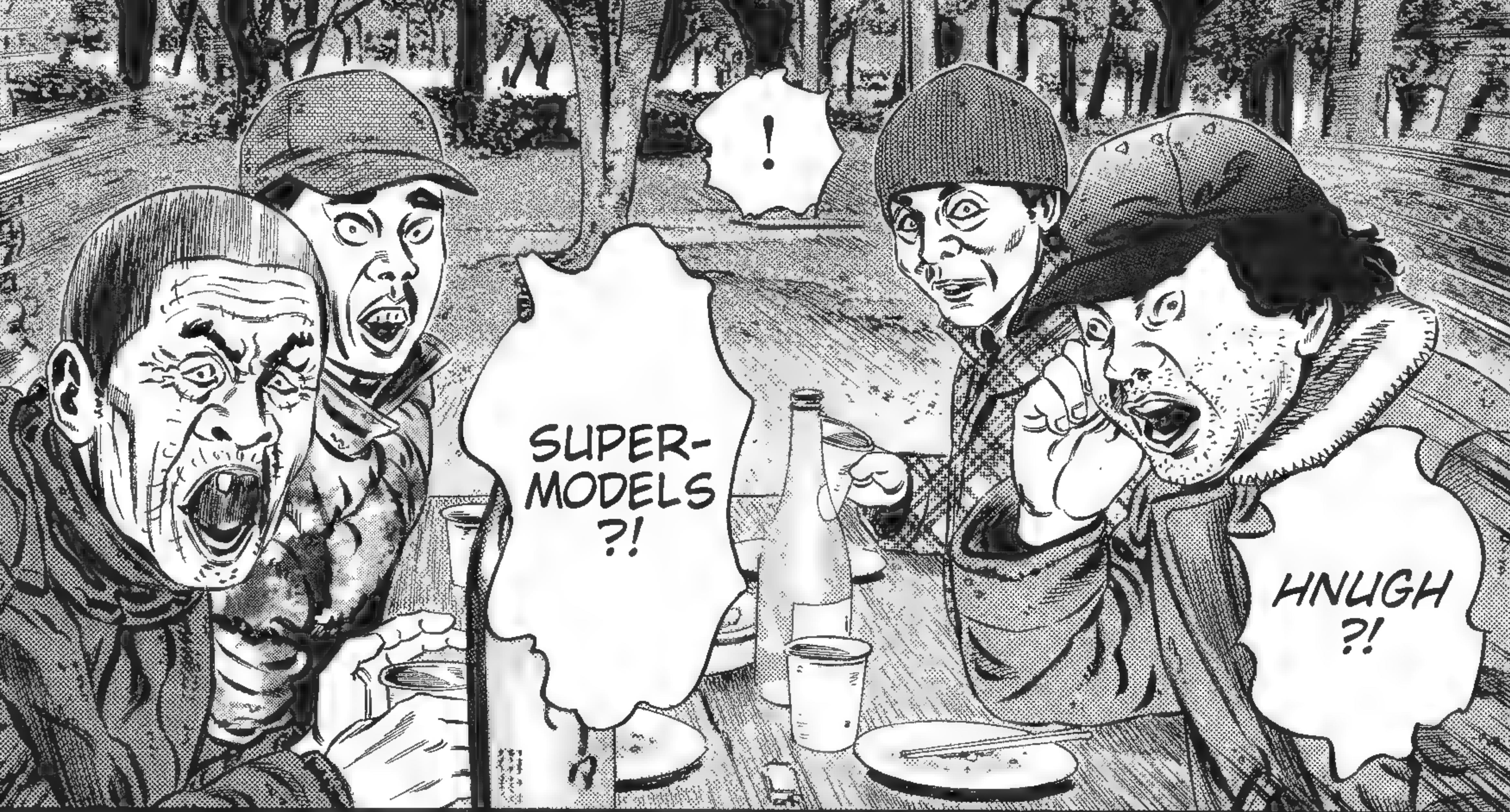


YOU'RE  
QUITE THE  
LOOKER,  
AFTER  
ALL.



I'VE  
BEEN WITH  
WOMEN WHO  
LOOKED LIKE  
SUPERMODELS.  
SO MANY OF  
'EM I COULD  
HURL.



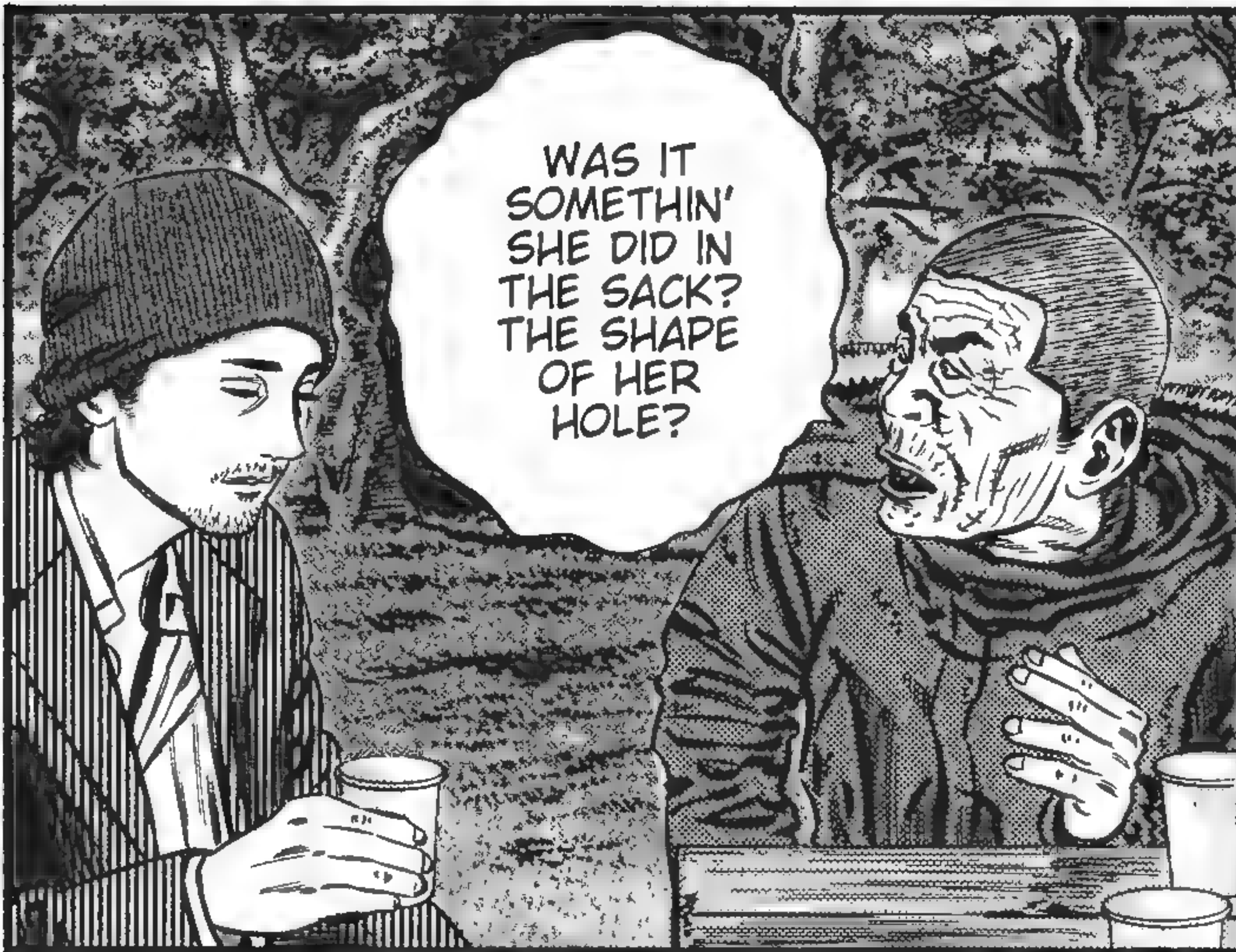






A  
HAG  
?!

A...



WAS IT  
SOMETHIN'  
SHE DID IN  
THE SACK?  
THE SHAPE  
OF HER  
HOLE?



THAT DON'T  
MAKE SENSE.  
WHAT WAS SO  
GREAT ABOUT  
HER?

TH...THE  
HOTTEST  
GAL YOU  
EVER LAID  
WAS...  
UGLY...?



NAH. IT'S  
MORE LIKE...  
ALL THOSE  
PRETTY,  
EMPTY  
DOLLS  
JUST...

DON'T  
EXPERIENCE  
THE WORLD  
THE SAME  
WAY UGLY  
GIRLS DO,  
YOU KNOW?





THAT  
UGLY WOMAN  
COULD SEE  
YOUR ENTIRE  
HEART.



SHE  
COULD SEE  
HEARTS?!



!



SHE  
WHAT  
?!



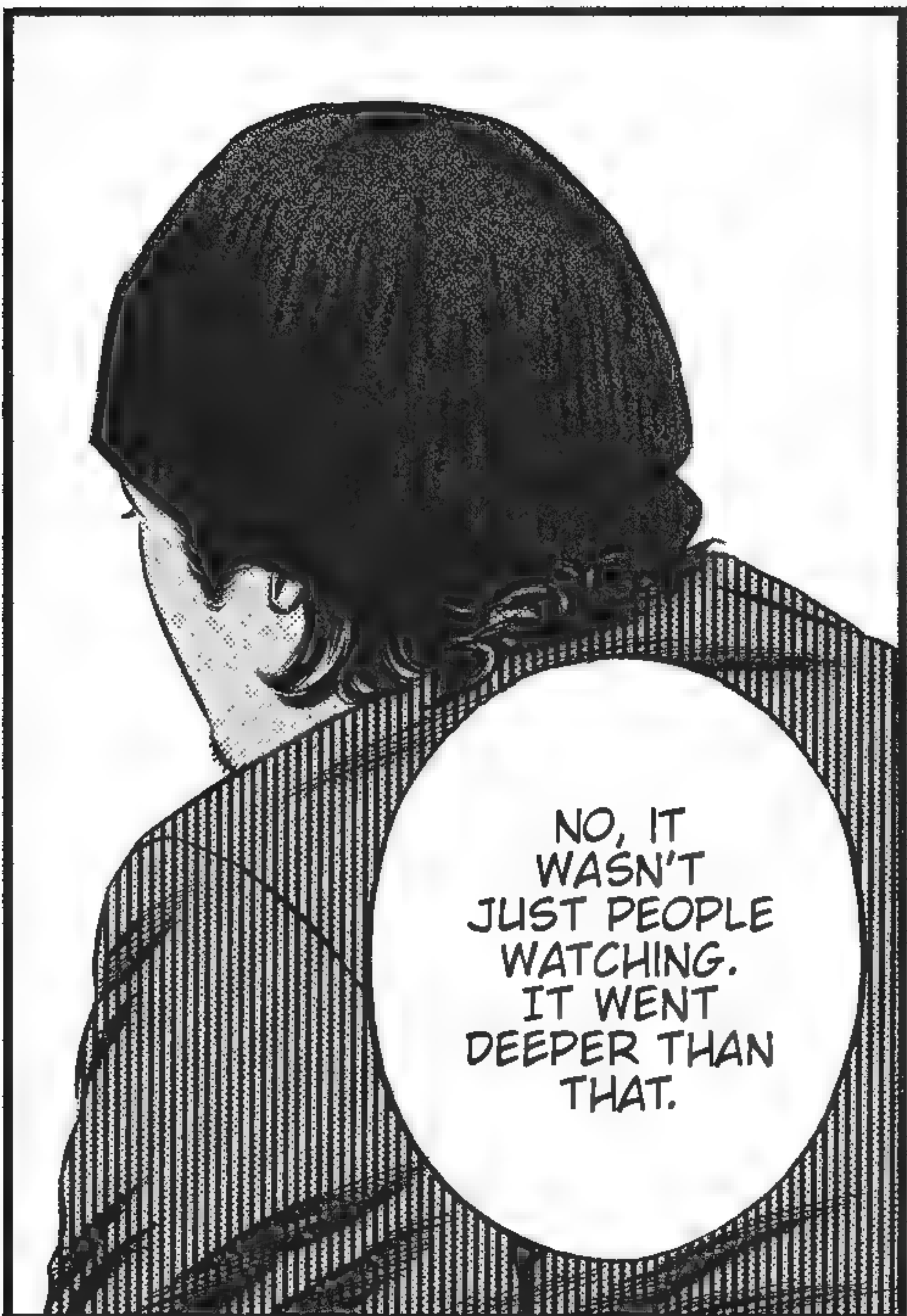
HWAH  
?!



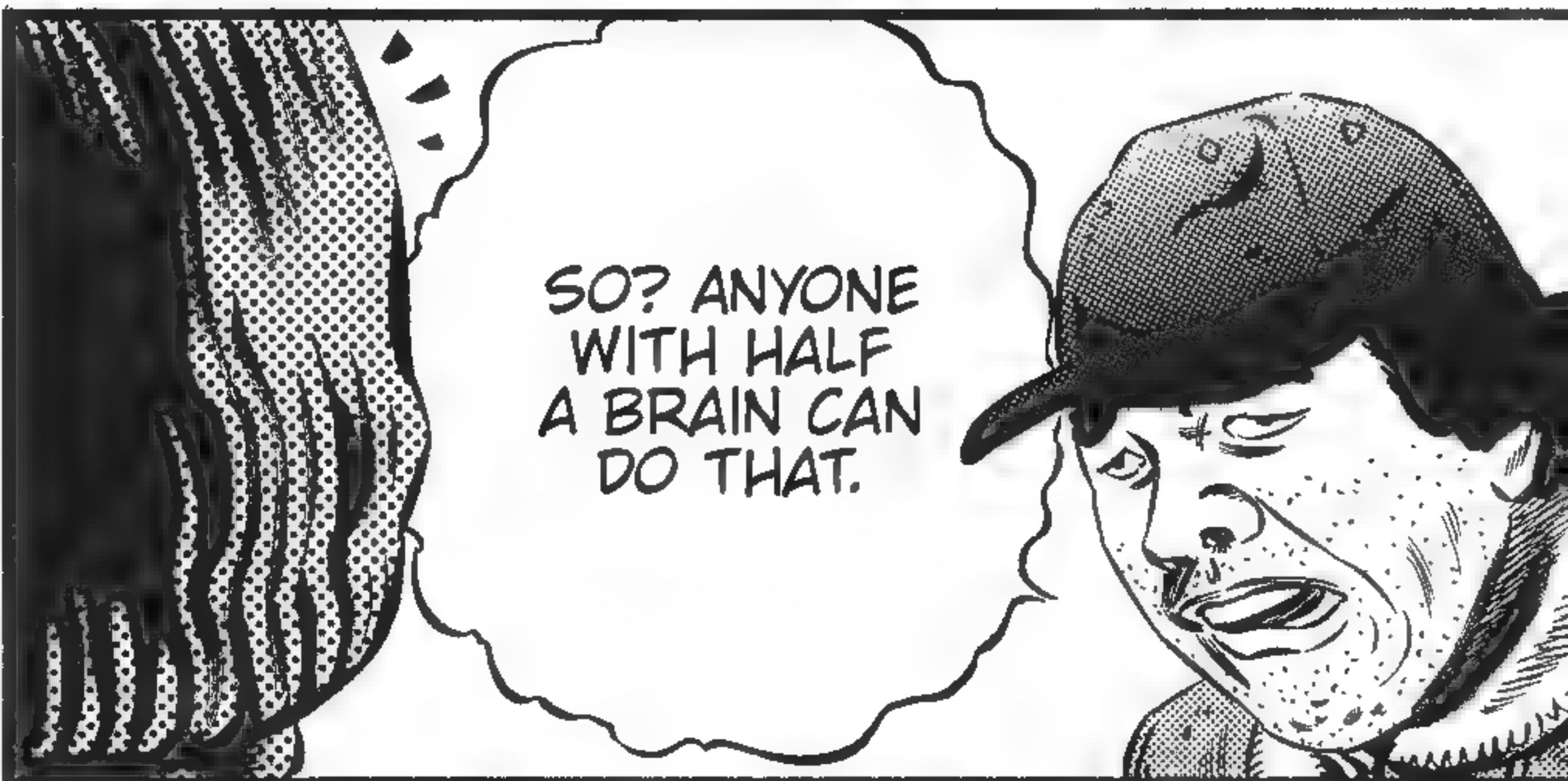


YUP.

ALL SHE  
HAD TO DO  
WAS LOOK AT  
YOU, AND SHE  
COULD READ  
YOUR HEART  
AS CLEAR  
AS DAY.



NO, IT  
WASN'T  
JUST PEOPLE  
WATCHING.  
IT WENT  
DEEPER THAN  
THAT.



SO? ANYONE  
WITH HALF  
A BRAIN CAN  
DO THAT.



YA  
JUST  
KNOW!

YOU CAN SEE  
WHO'S CHILL  
AND WHO'S A  
PRICK, EASY!  
DON'T EVEN  
NEED TO TALK  
TO 'EM.

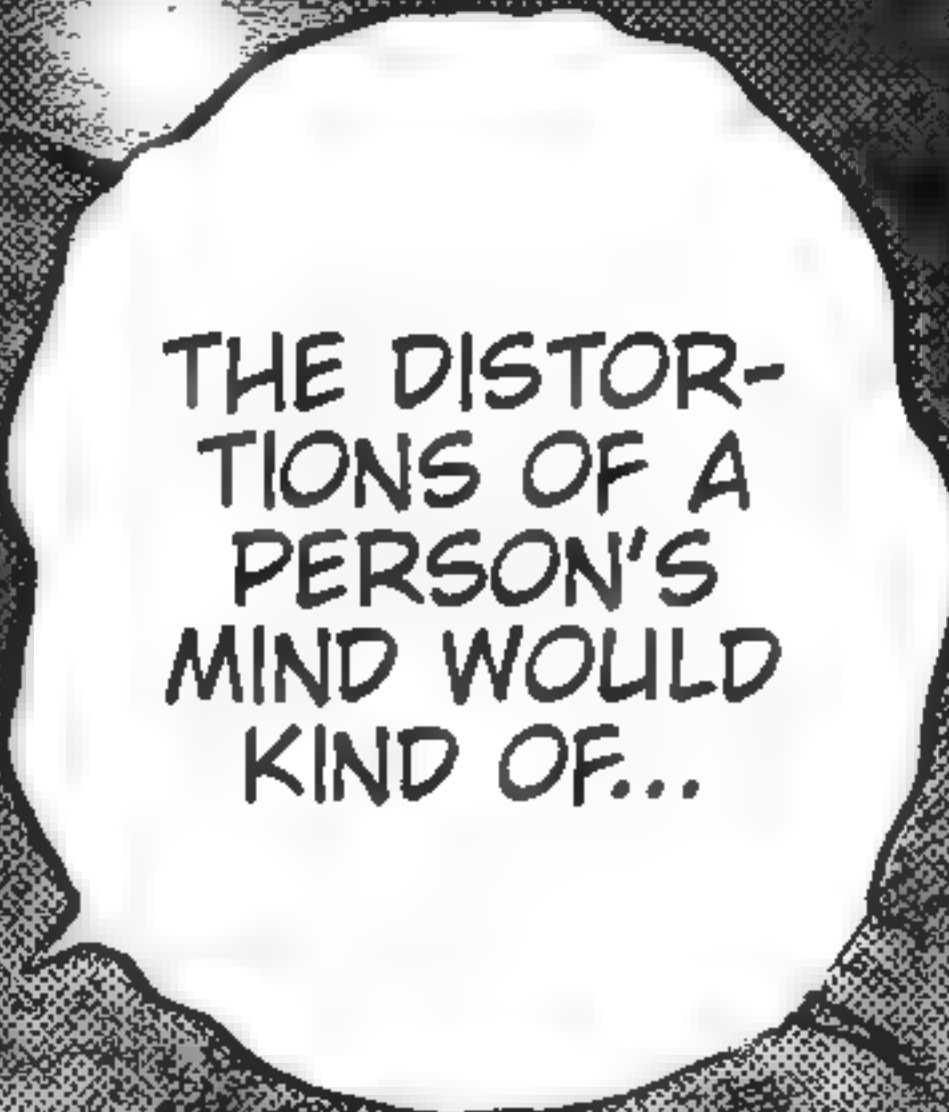


SHE COULD  
SEE THE  
ESSENCE OF  
YOUR SOUL--  
SO CLEARLY IT  
WAS ALMOST  
MAGICAL.

























BETCHA  
NOT A WORD  
A'THAT WAS  
TRUE.

PFFT.  
SUCKER'S  
BET.

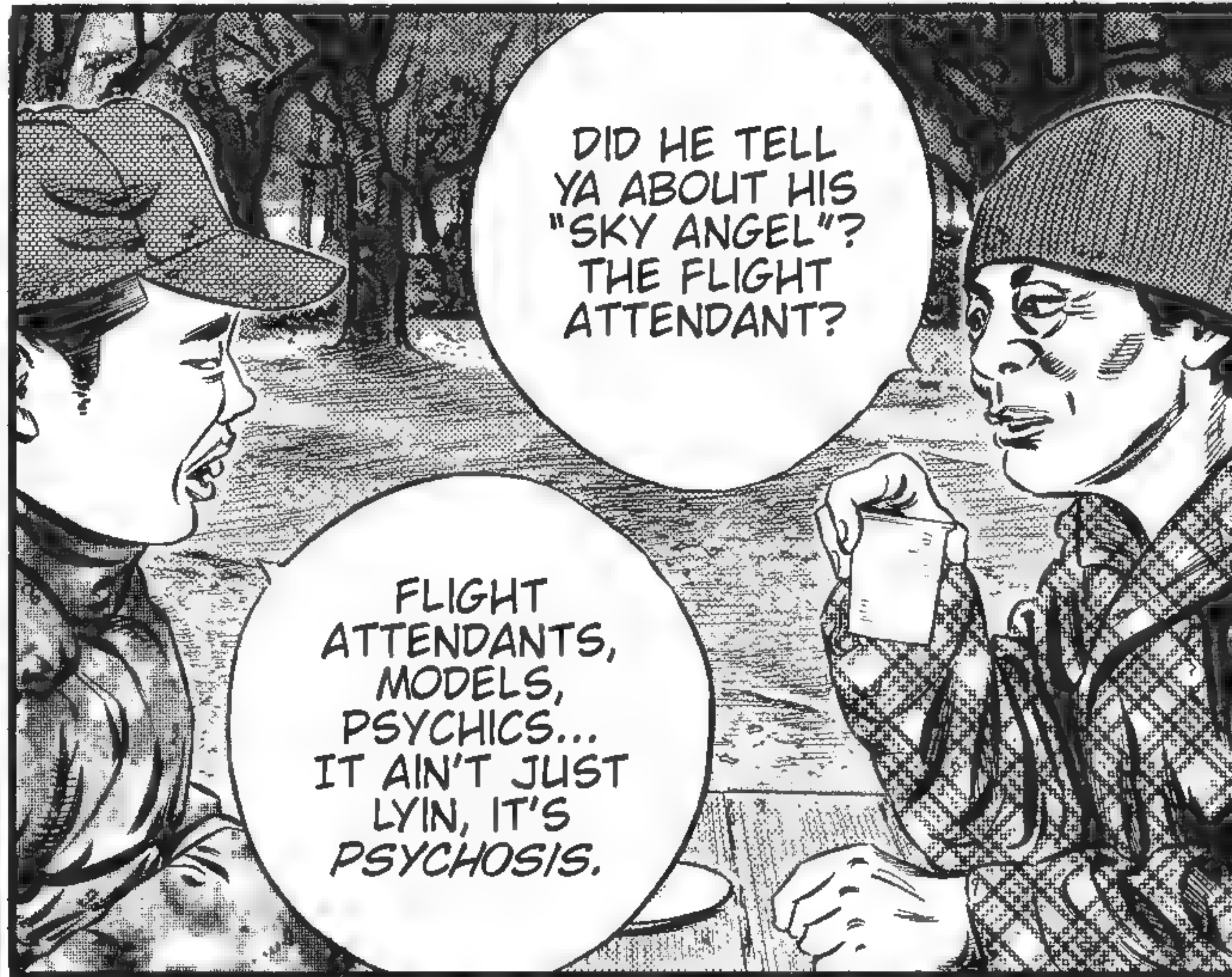


HE BRINGS  
US BOOZE,  
DON'T HE?

AW, LEAVE  
THE KID  
ALONE.

HE DON'T  
MEAN NO  
HARM.

KEH  
KEH  
KEH  
KEH  
KEH!



DID HE TELL  
YA ABOUT HIS  
"SKY ANGEL"?  
THE FLIGHT  
ATTENDANT?

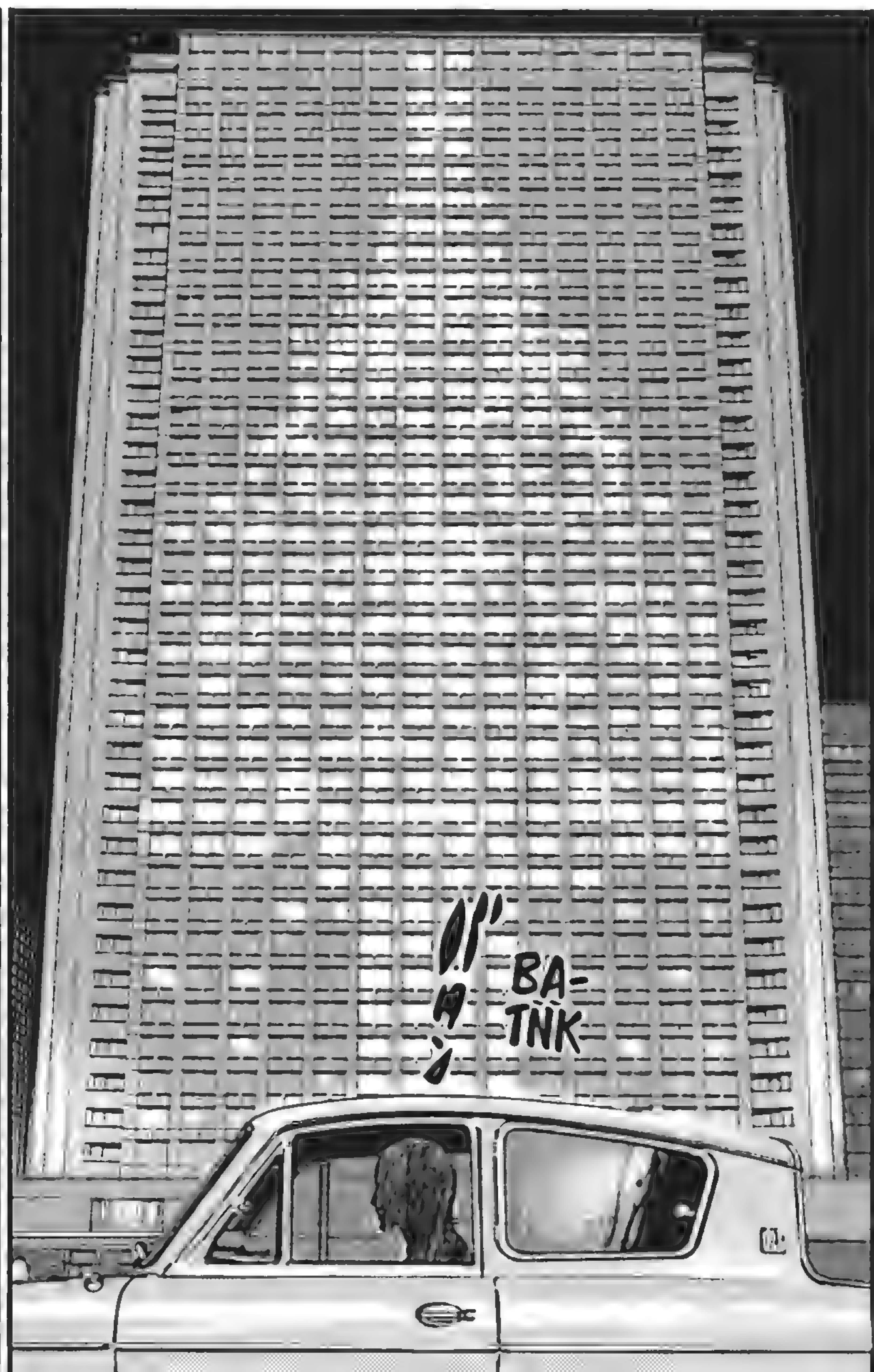
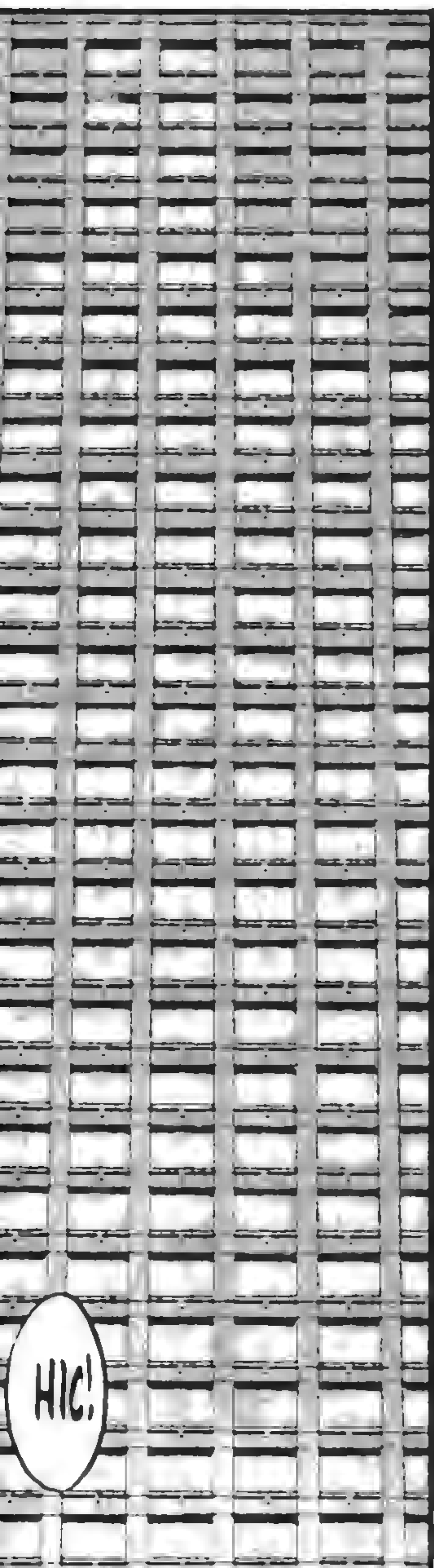
FLIGHT  
ATTENDANTS,  
MODELS,  
PSYCHICS...  
IT AIN'T JUST  
LYIN, IT'S  
PSYCHOSIS.



HIC!



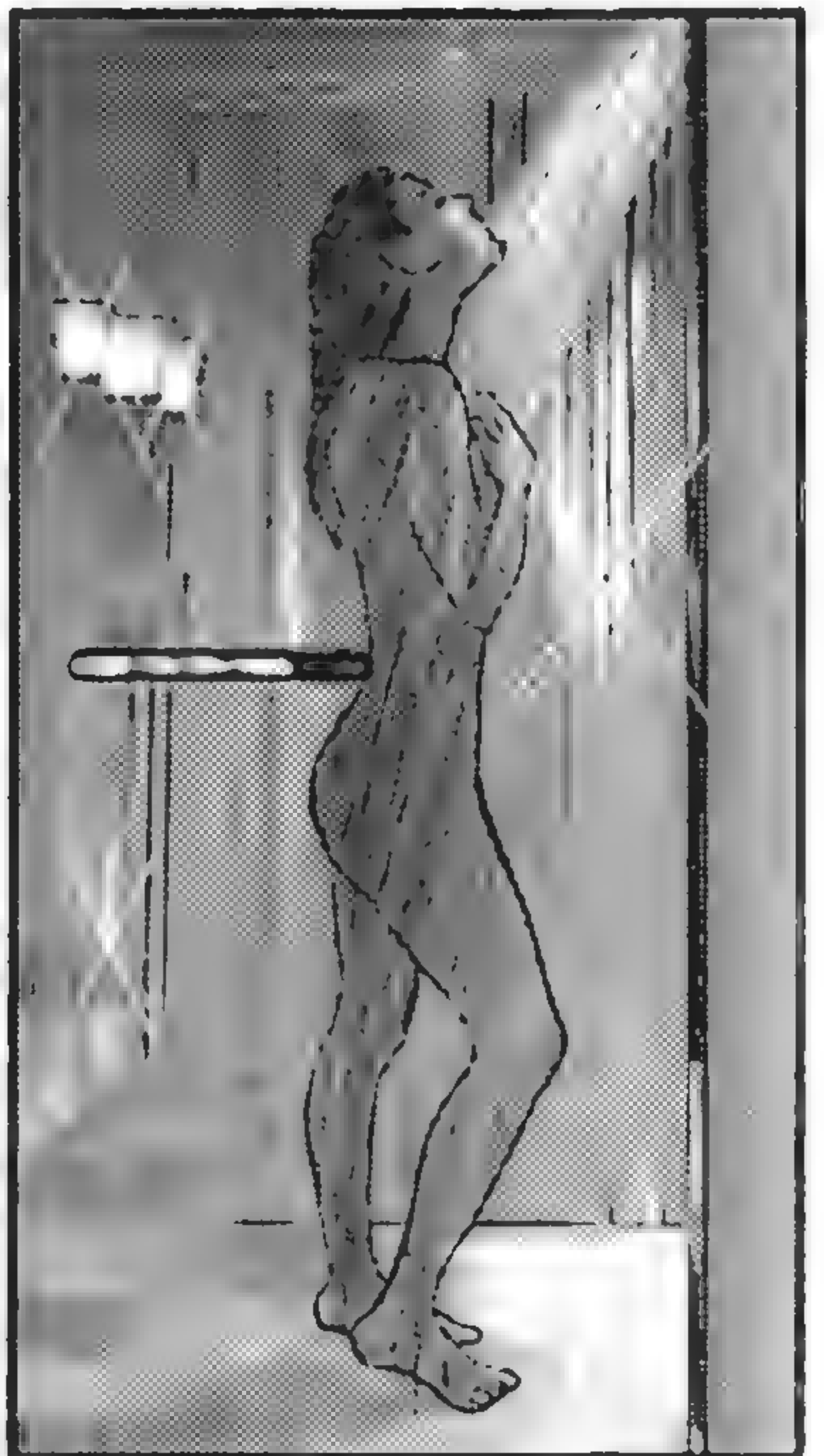




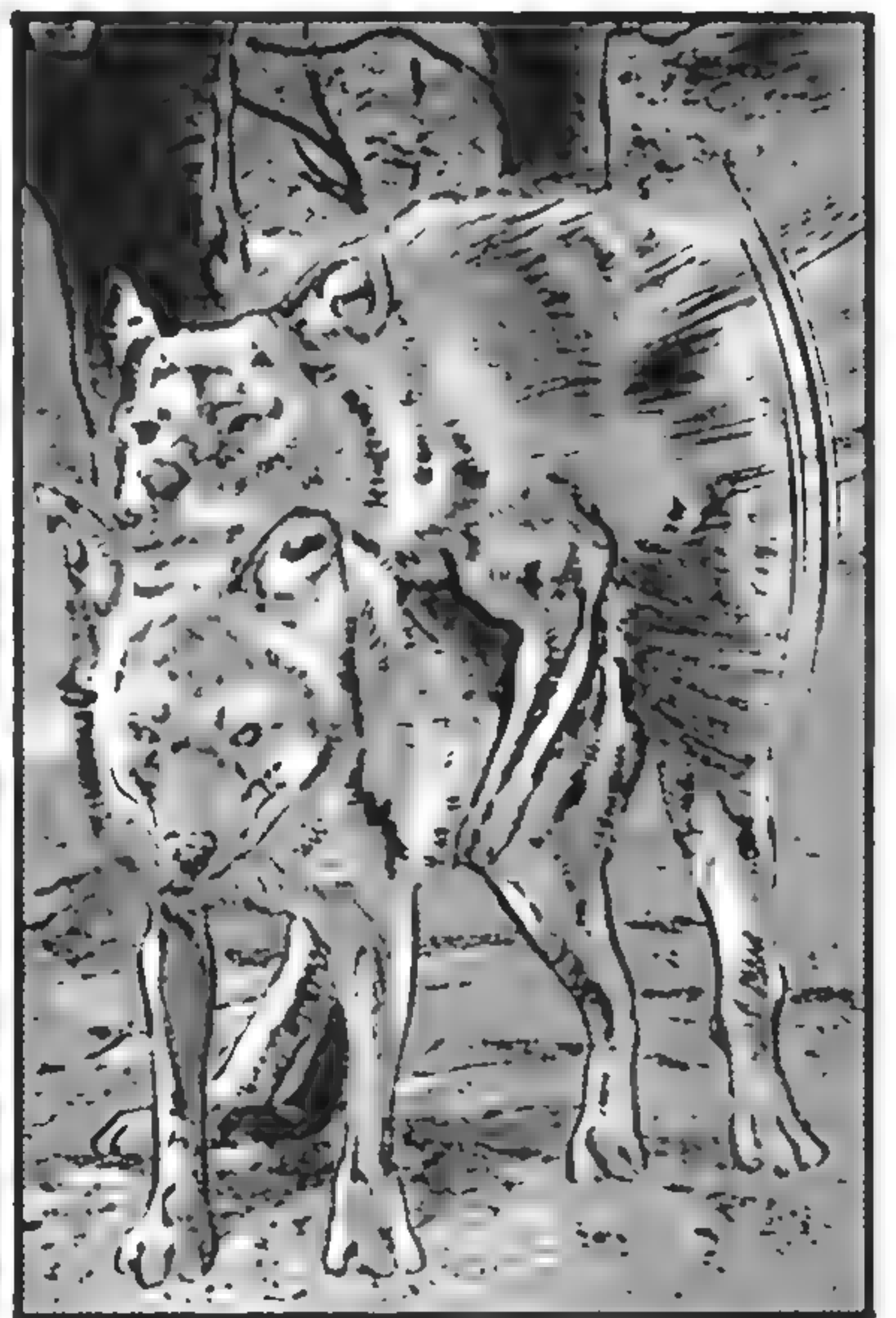
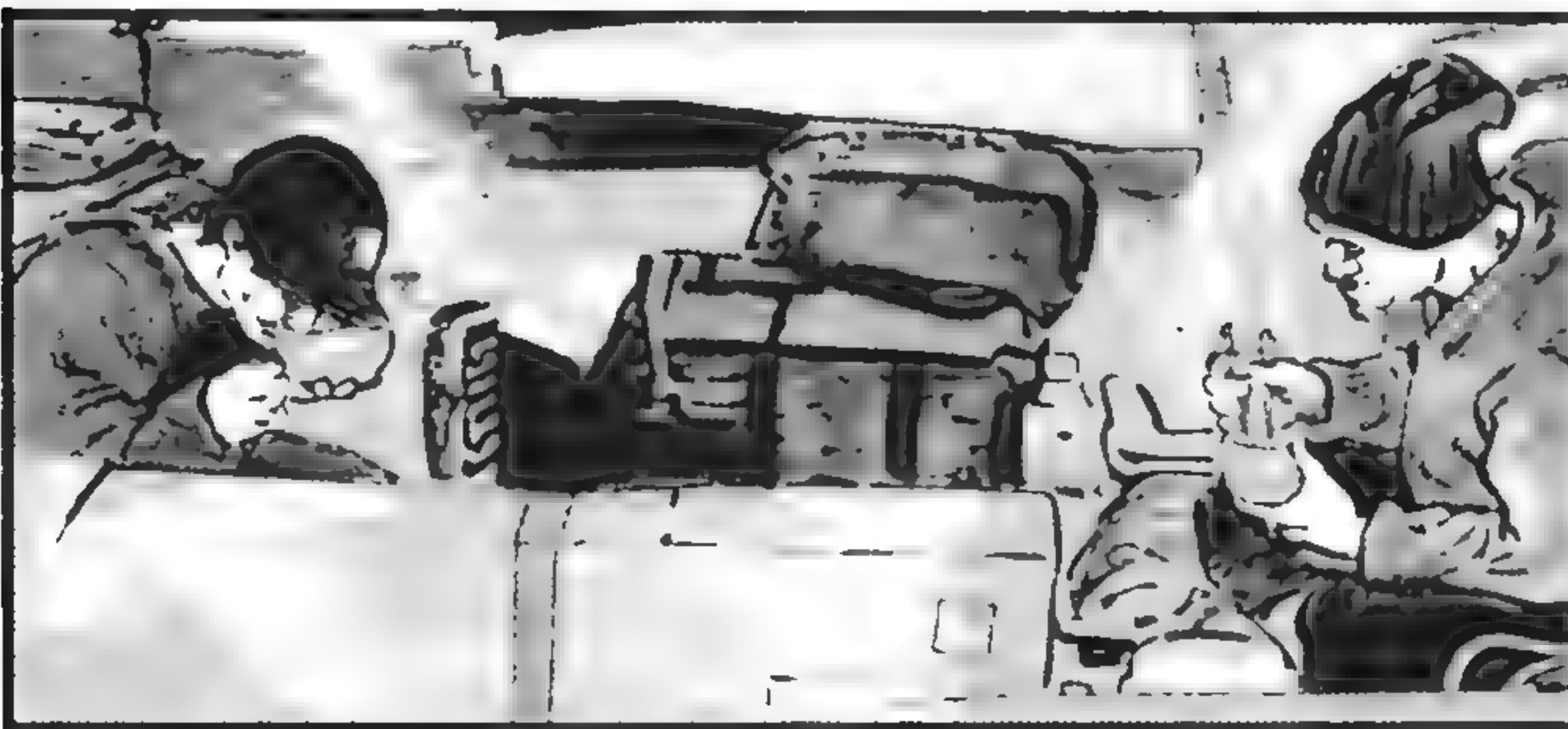
НІС!

БА-  
ТІК









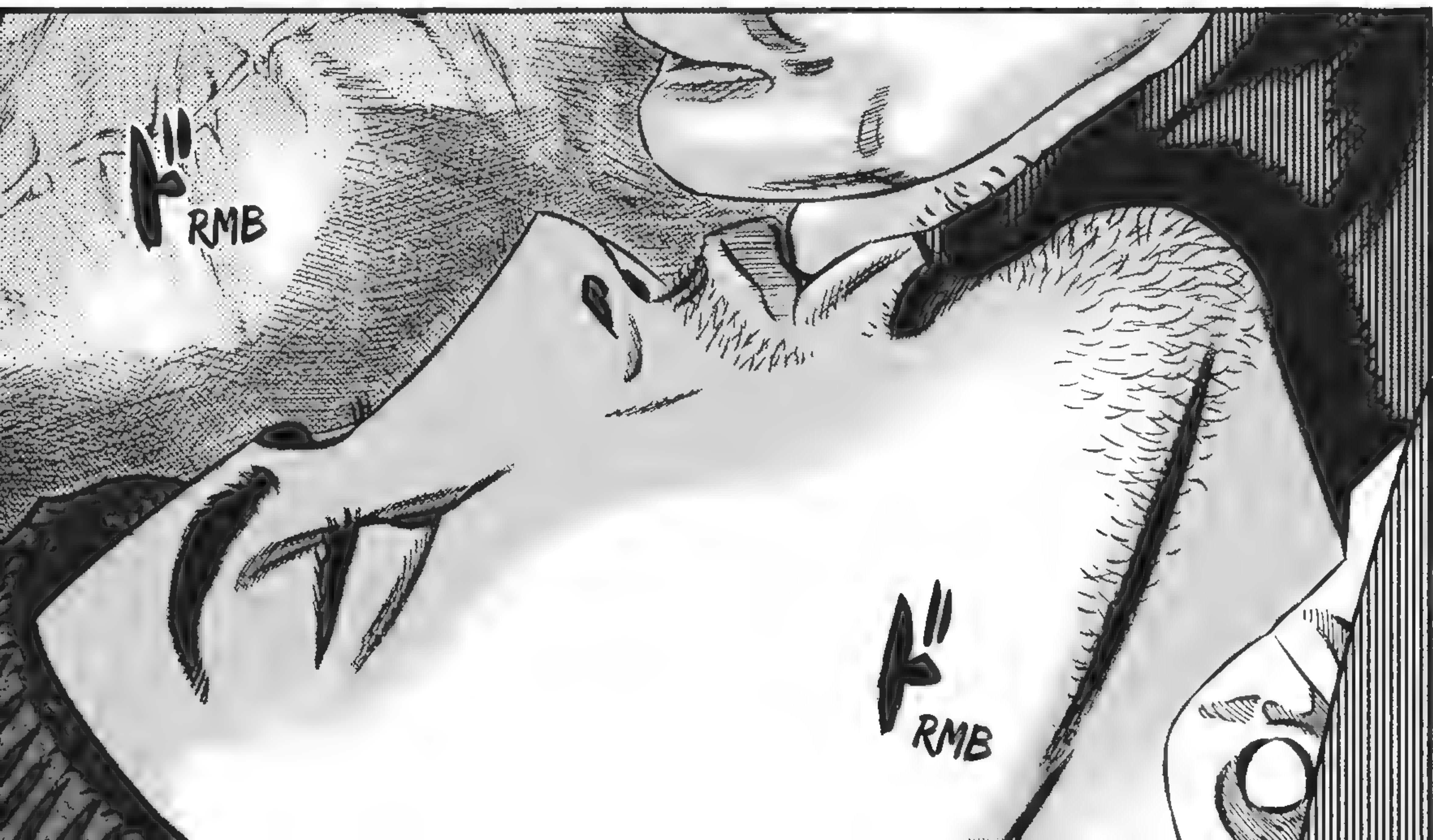




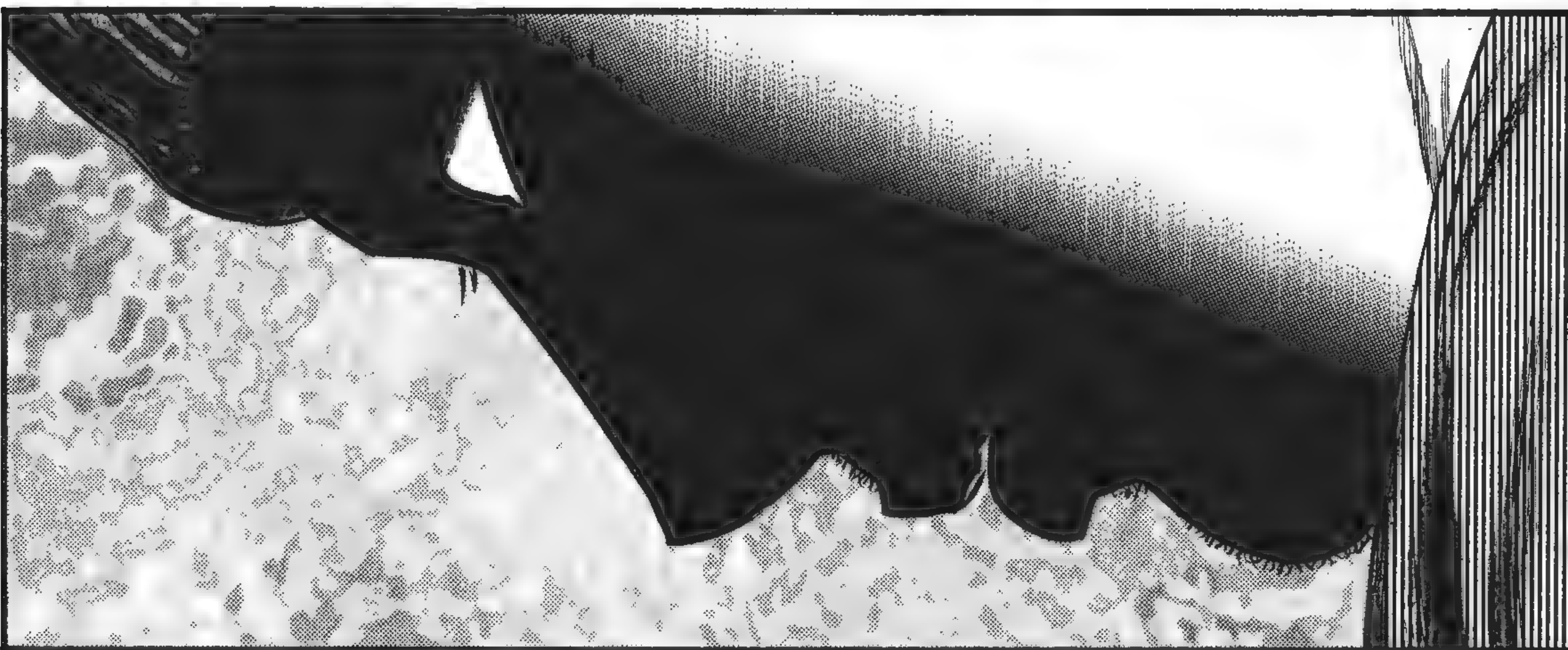












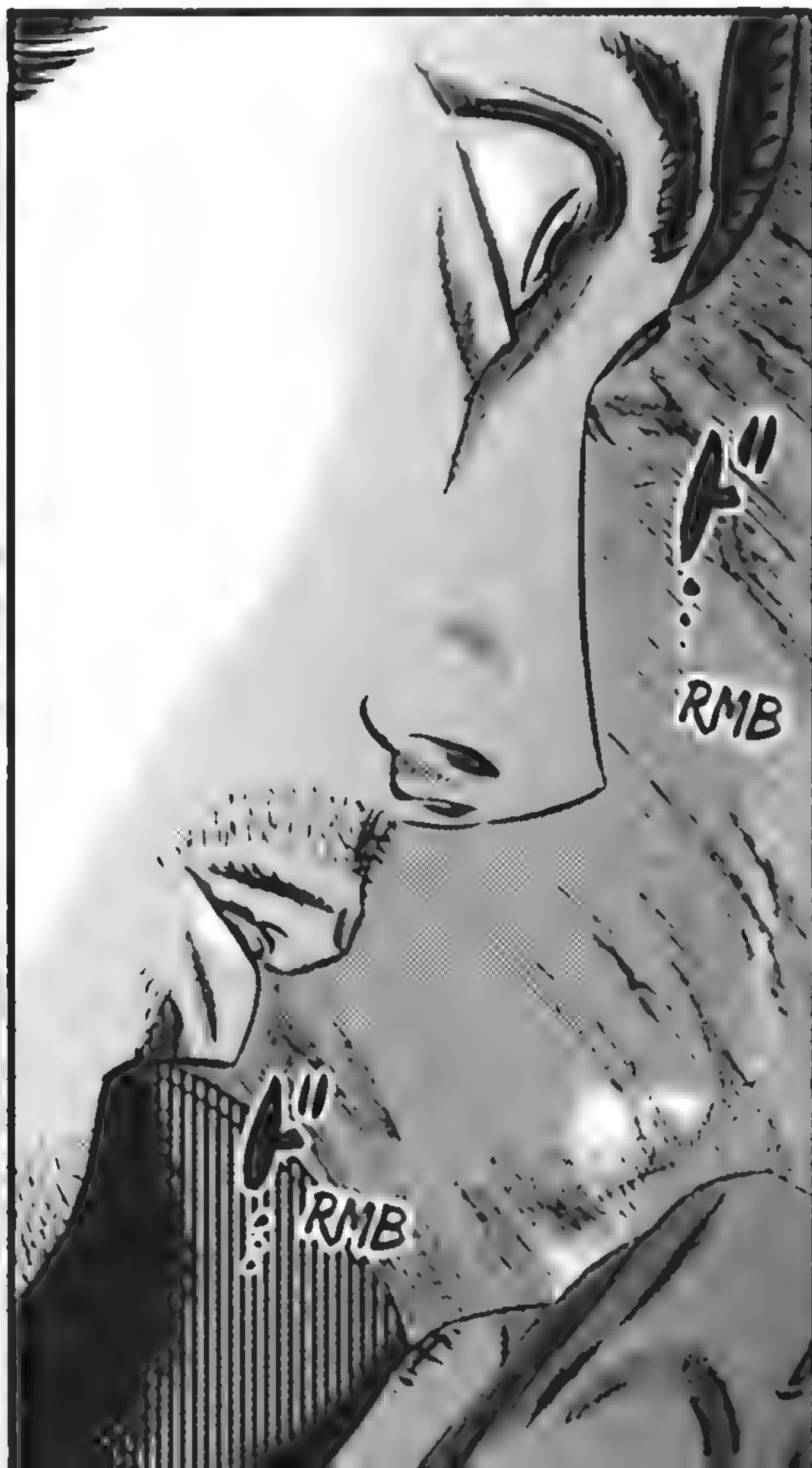
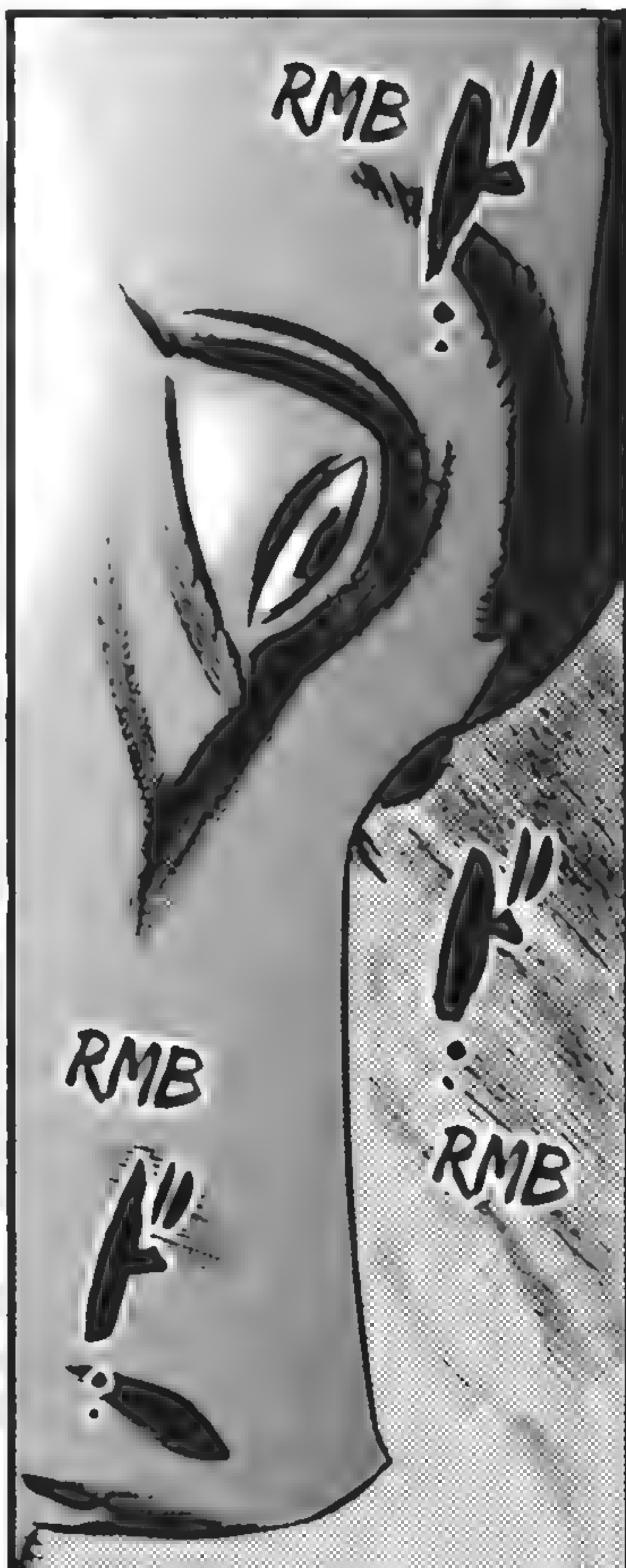








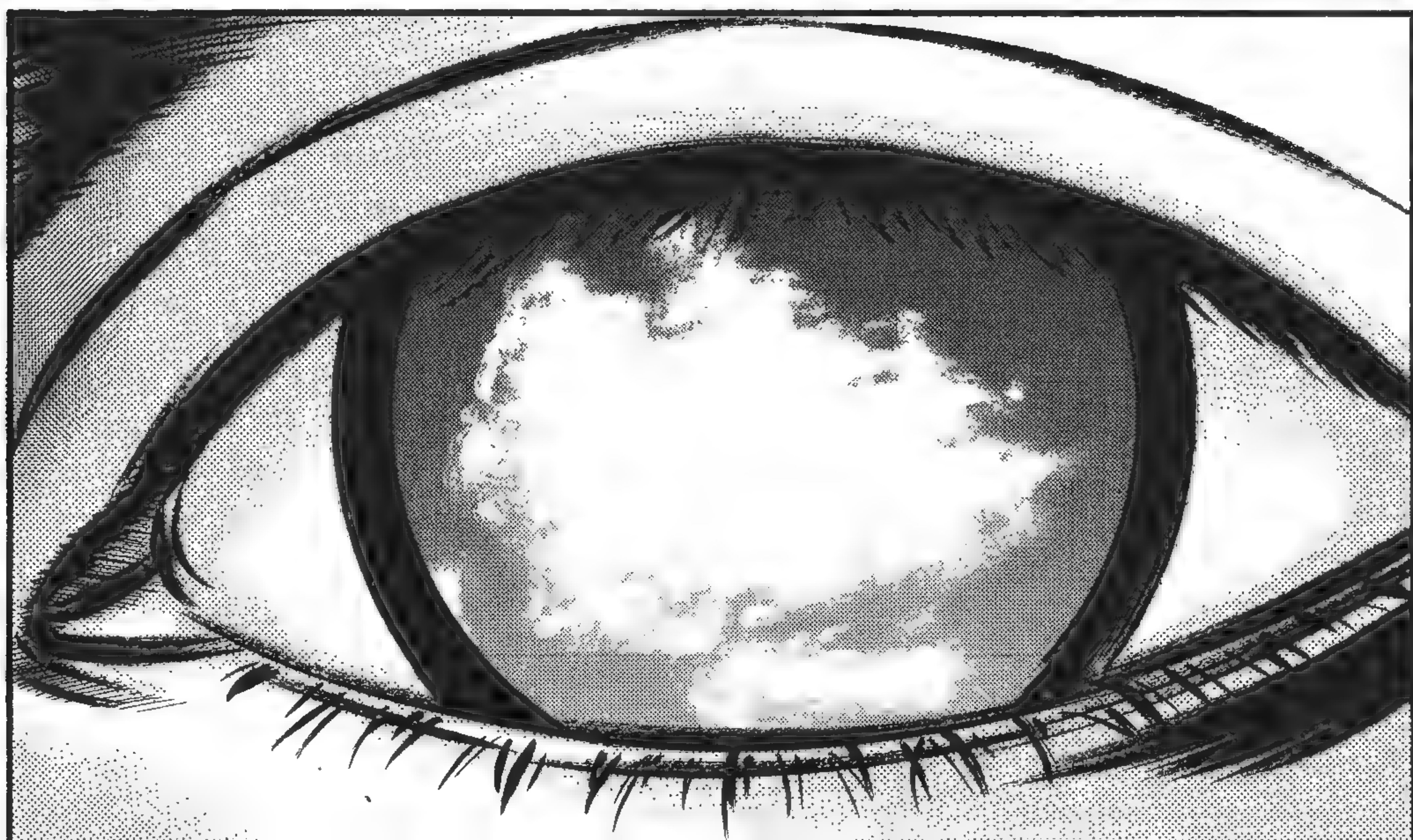
















"YOU  
LOOK  
LIKE A  
CLOUD,  
NAKO-  
CHAN.



"JUST  
LIKE A  
CLOUD!"

"YET  
INSCRUTABLE.  
ALWAYS  
CHANGING  
SHAPE.



"ALL  
PURE AND  
WHITE AND  
INNOCENT

...

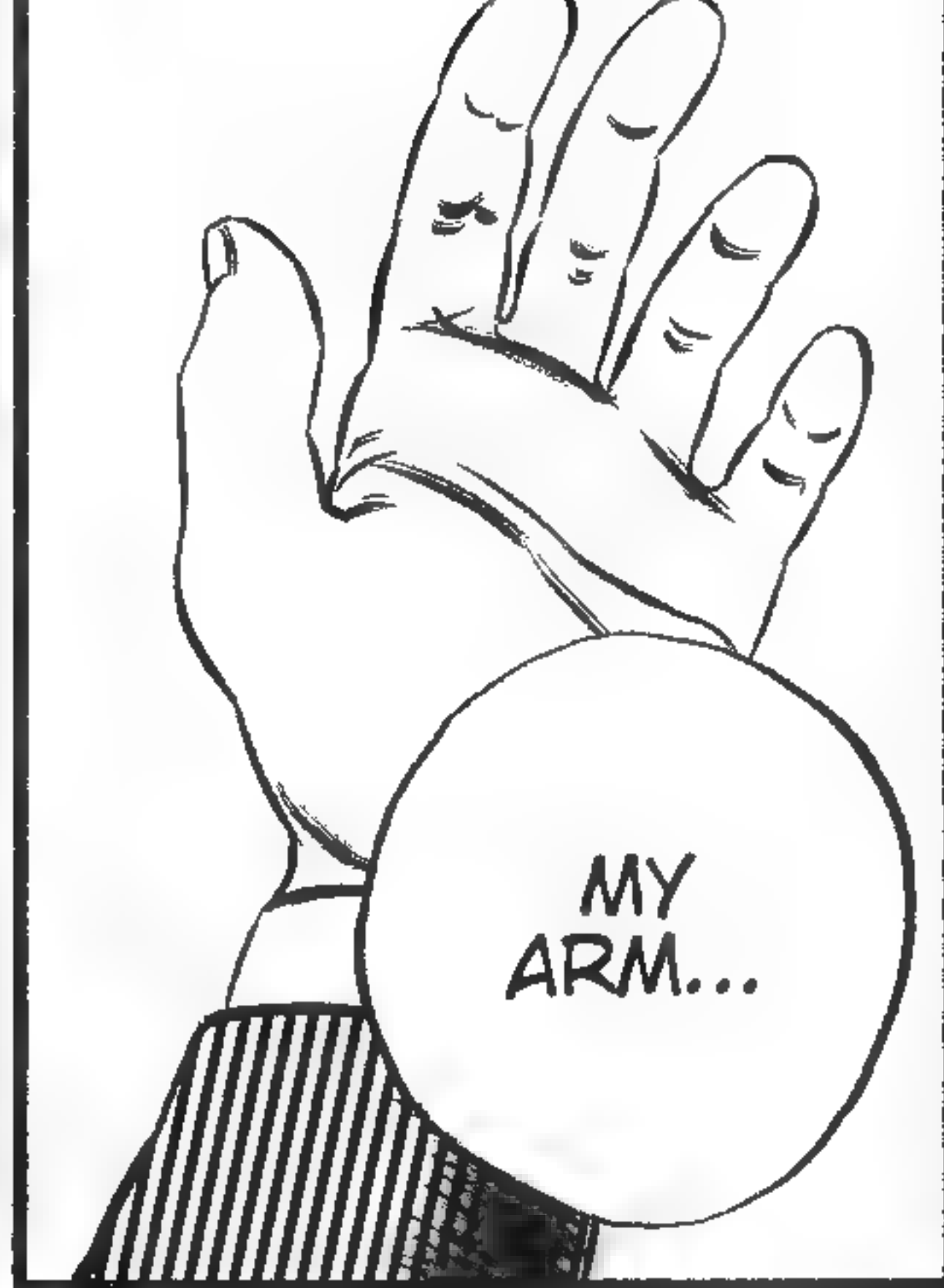








MY  
LEG...



MY  
ARM...



A CLOUD,  
HUH?  
THAT'S NOT  
WHAT I  
SEE IN THE  
MIRROR.



SUCH  
TWISTED  
...

THEY'VE  
BECOME  
...



HM?





WHAT  
THE...??



HUH...?



THEY'RE  
GONE?



TH...









WH...

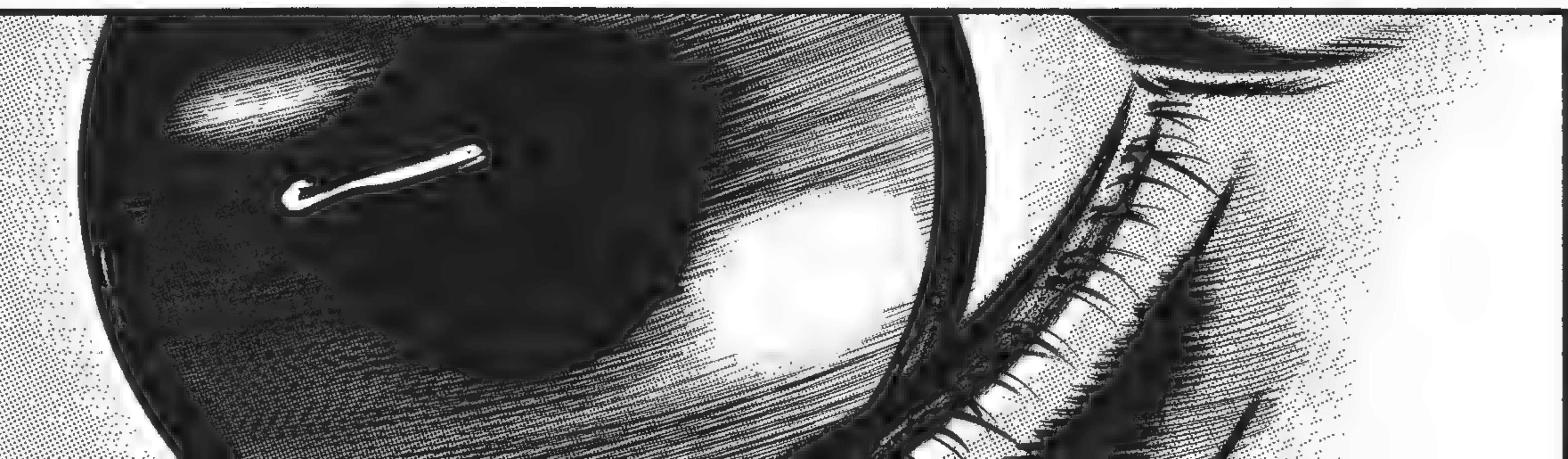
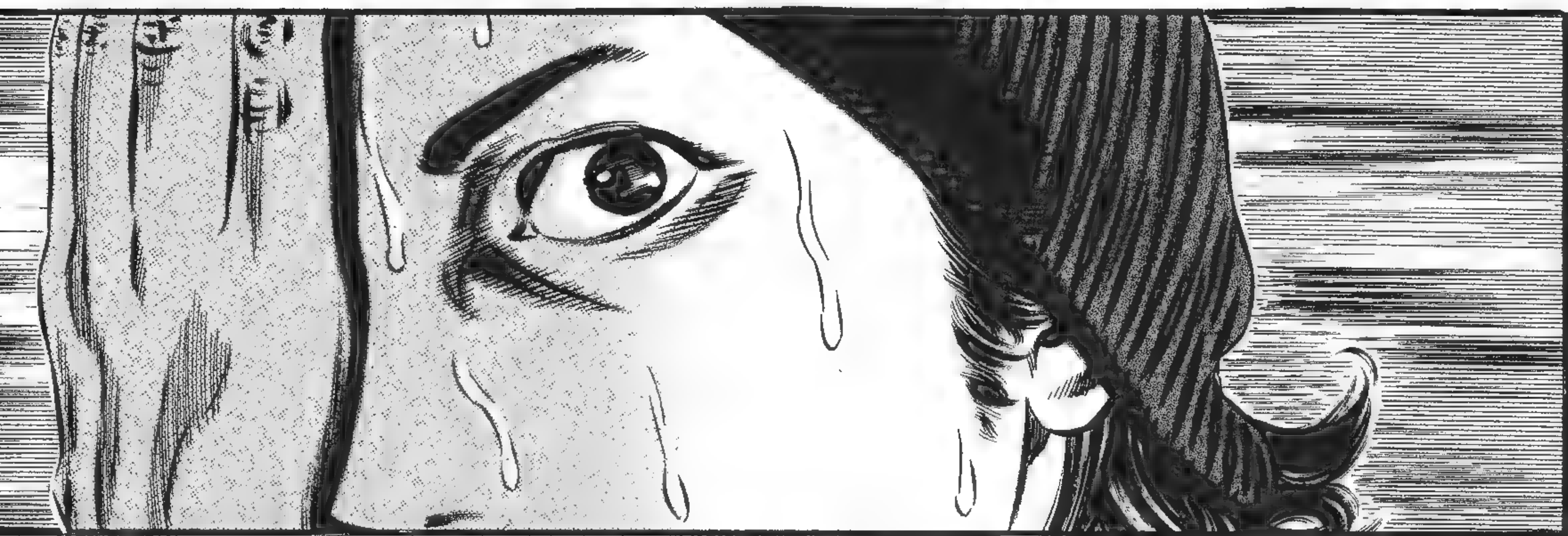


WHAT  
THE HELL  
IS GOING  
ON?

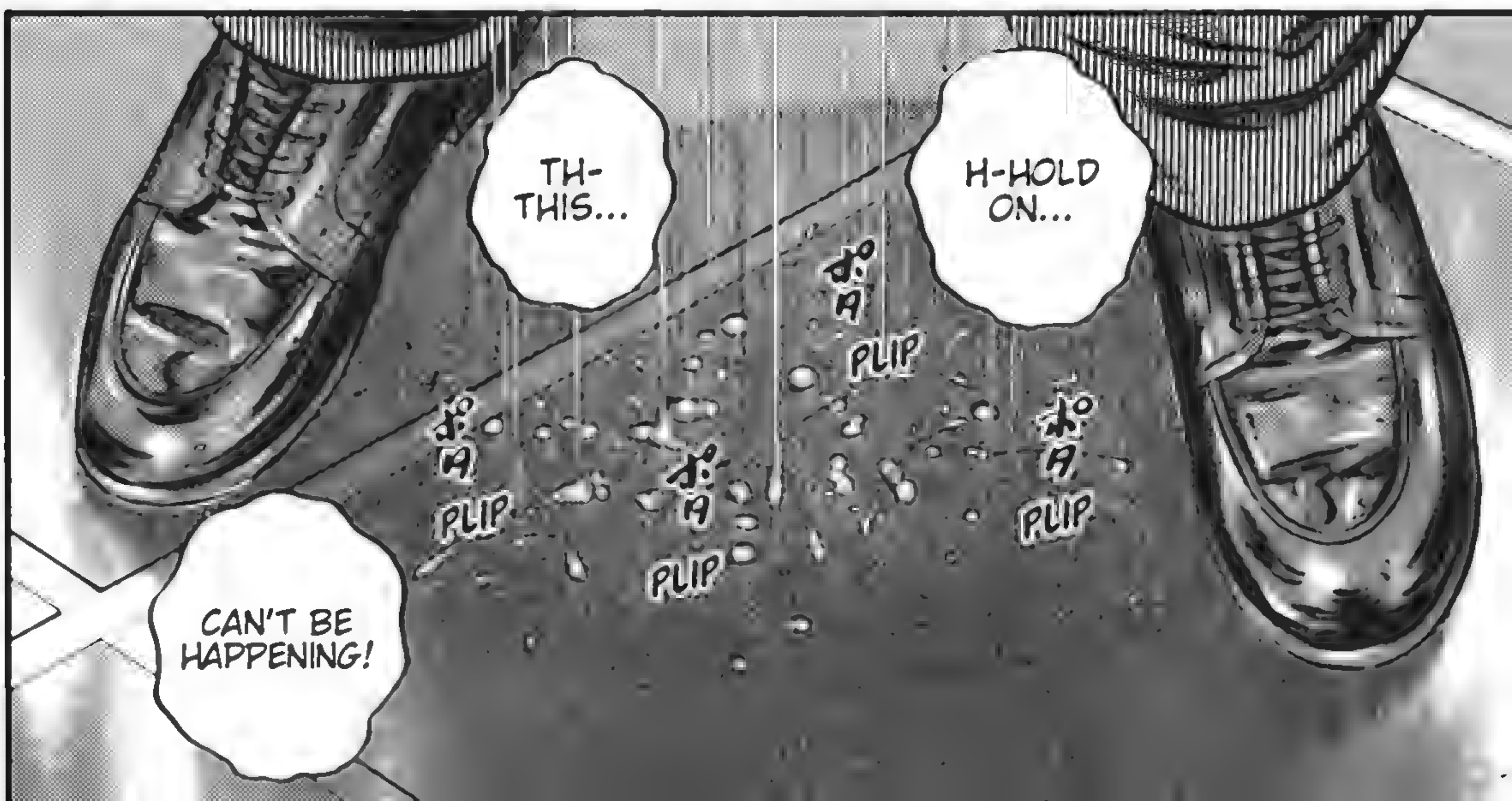
















YOU  
BASTARDS!  
YOU CAN'T  
VANISH ON  
ME NOW! IF  
YOU DO...



BACK  
TO LIVING  
A LIE IN  
THAT...THAT  
*LIMBO!*



BACK  
TO...THAT  
DAMN  
FICTION.



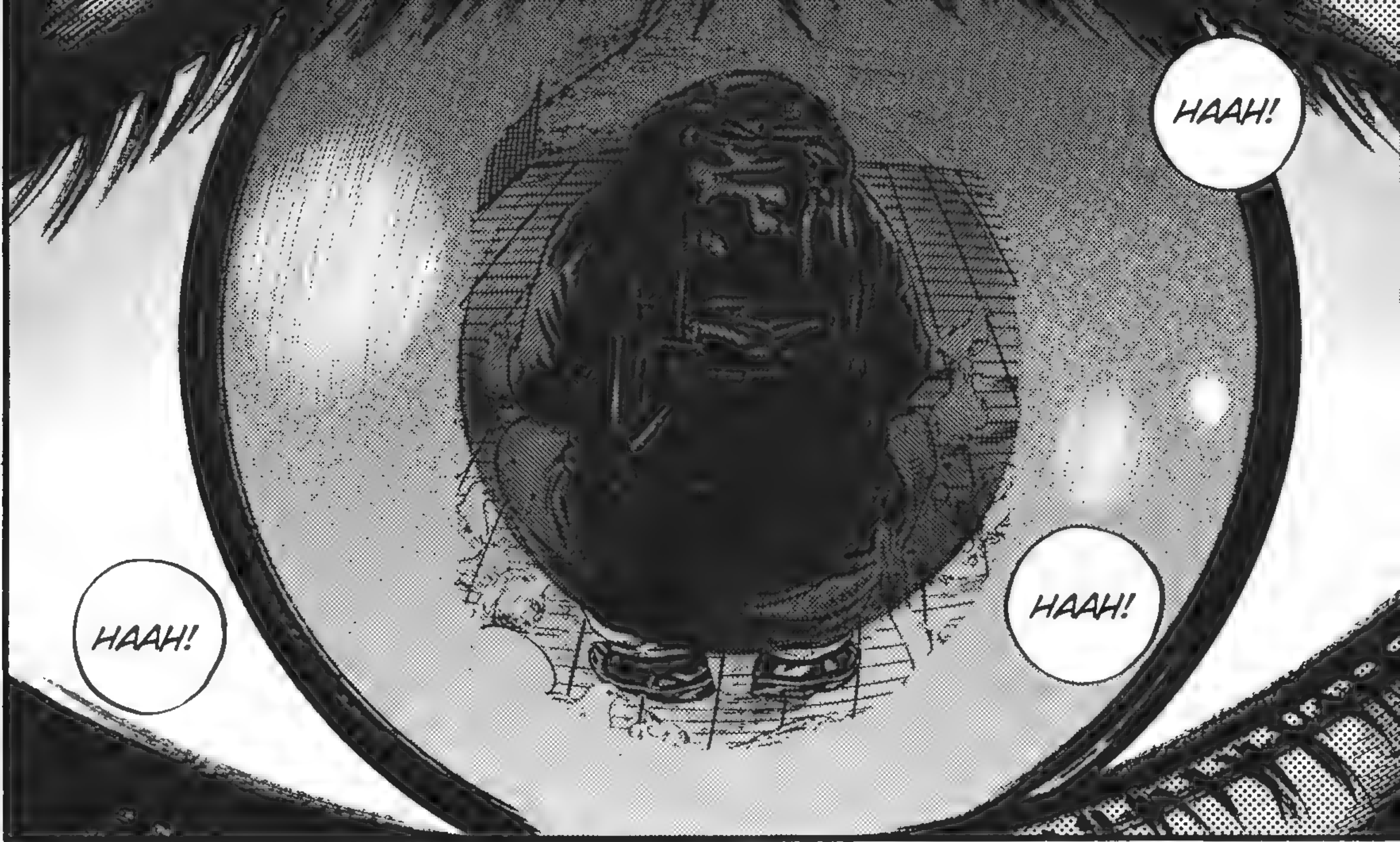
I'LL BE  
BACK TO  
SQUARE  
ONE...





YOU  
CAN'T  
LEAVE  
ME  
HERE  
ALONE  
!





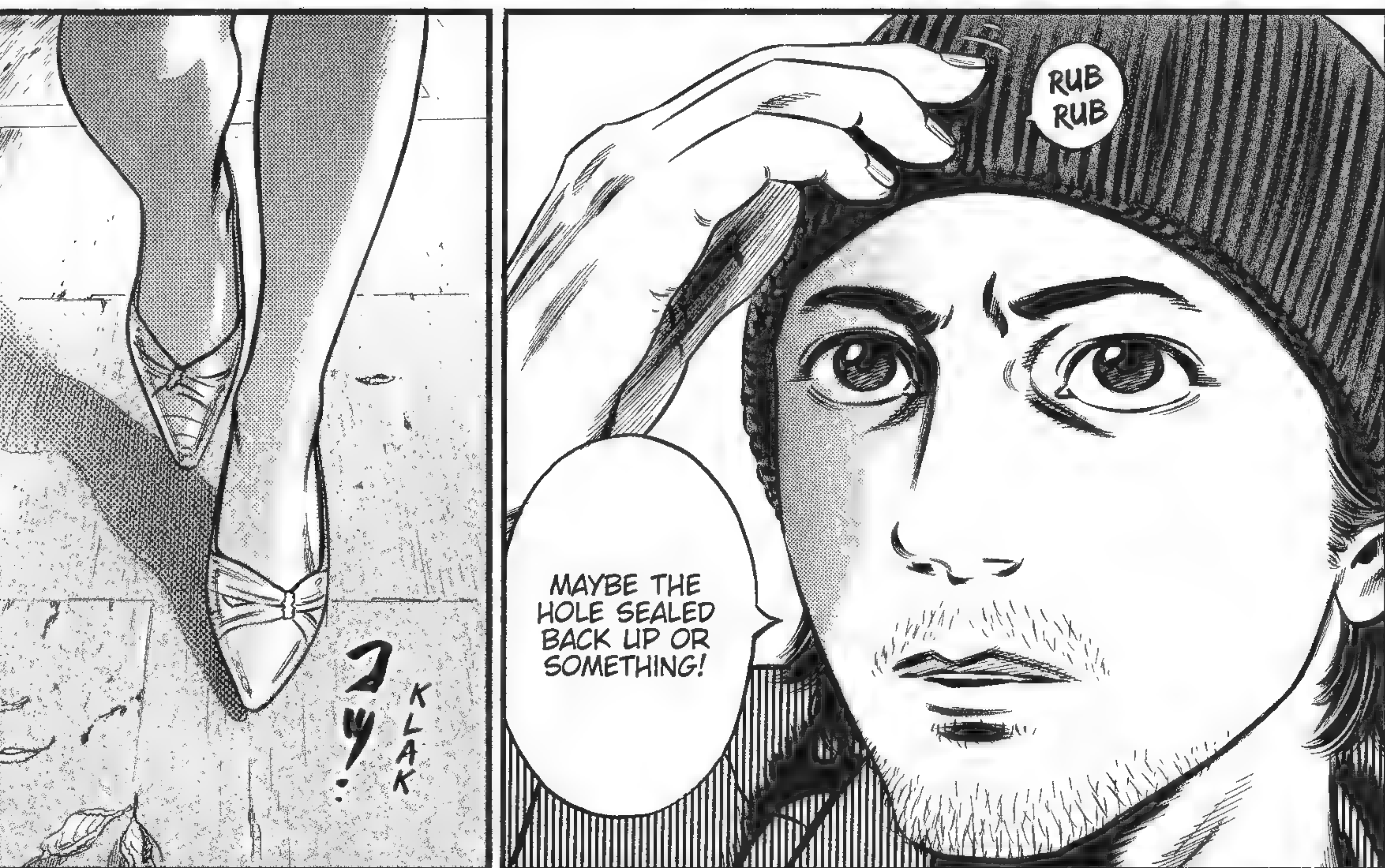




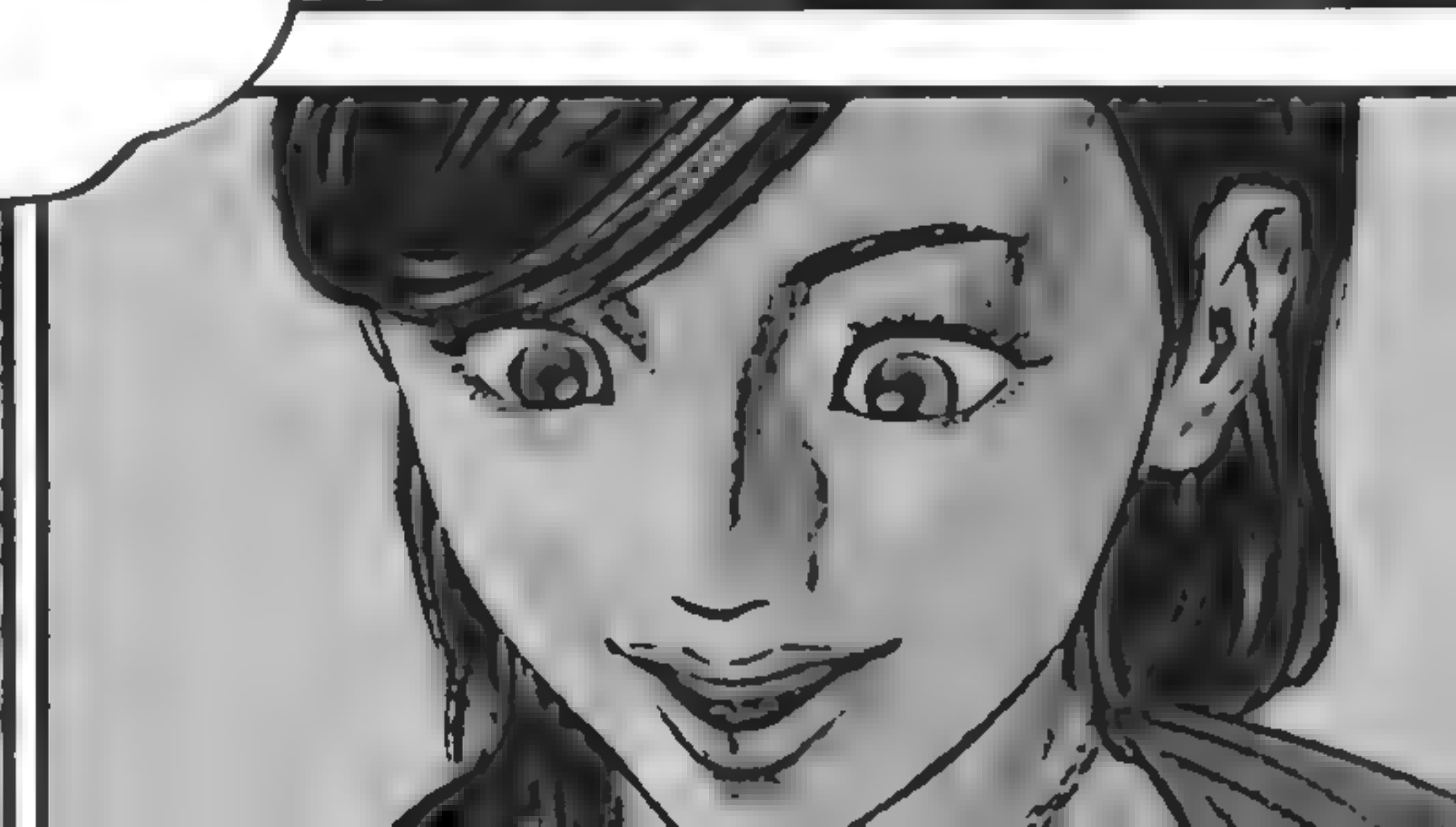
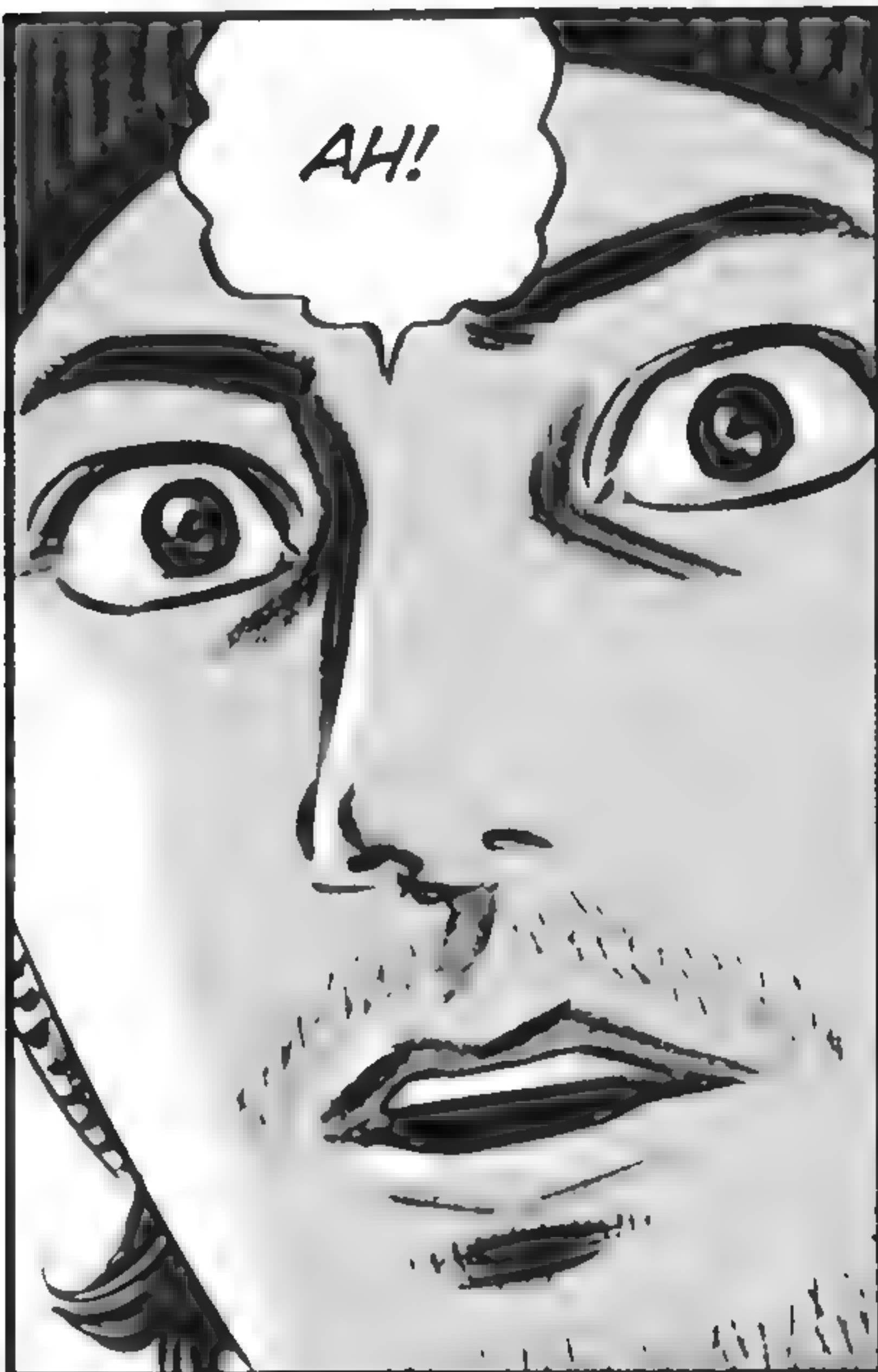








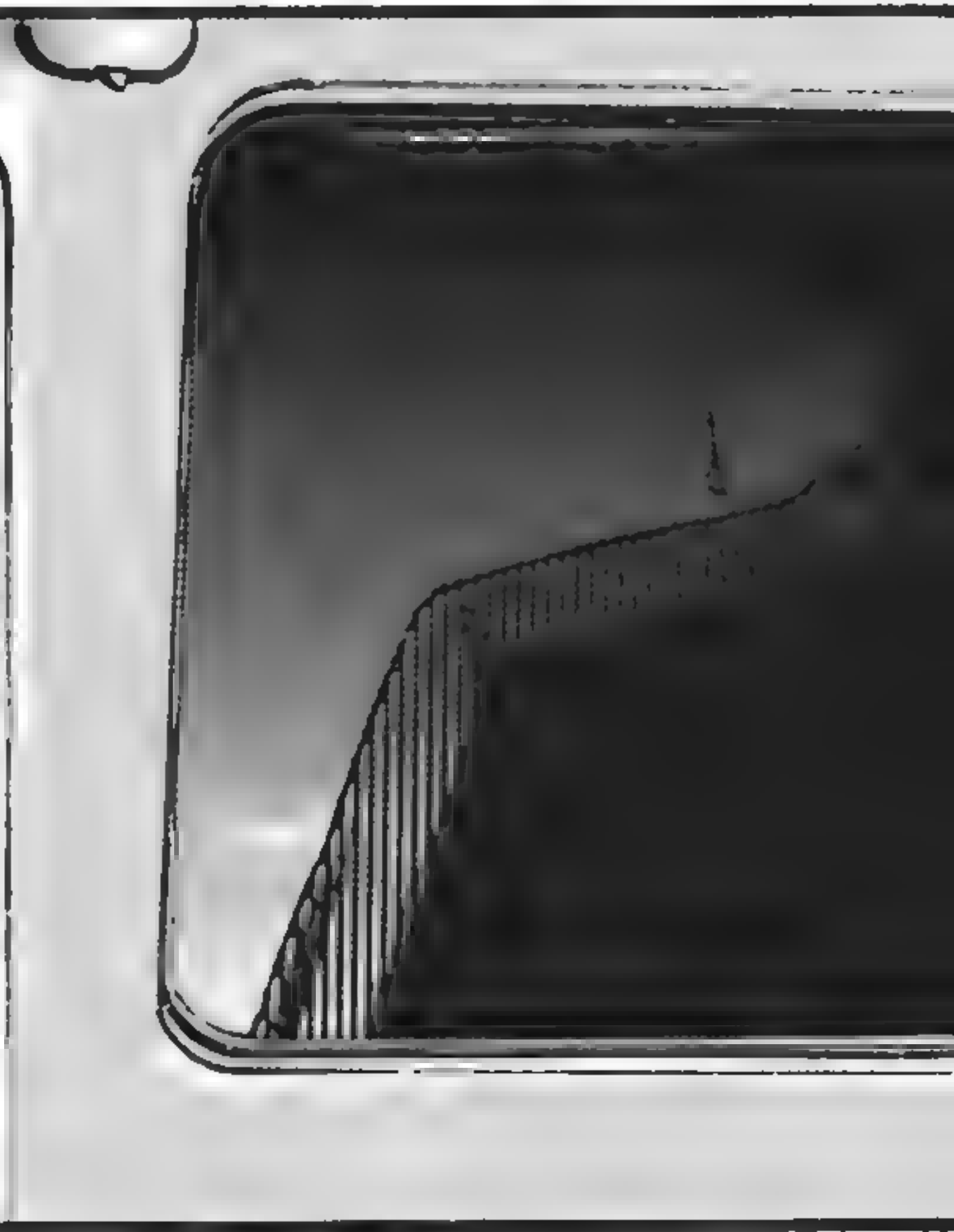
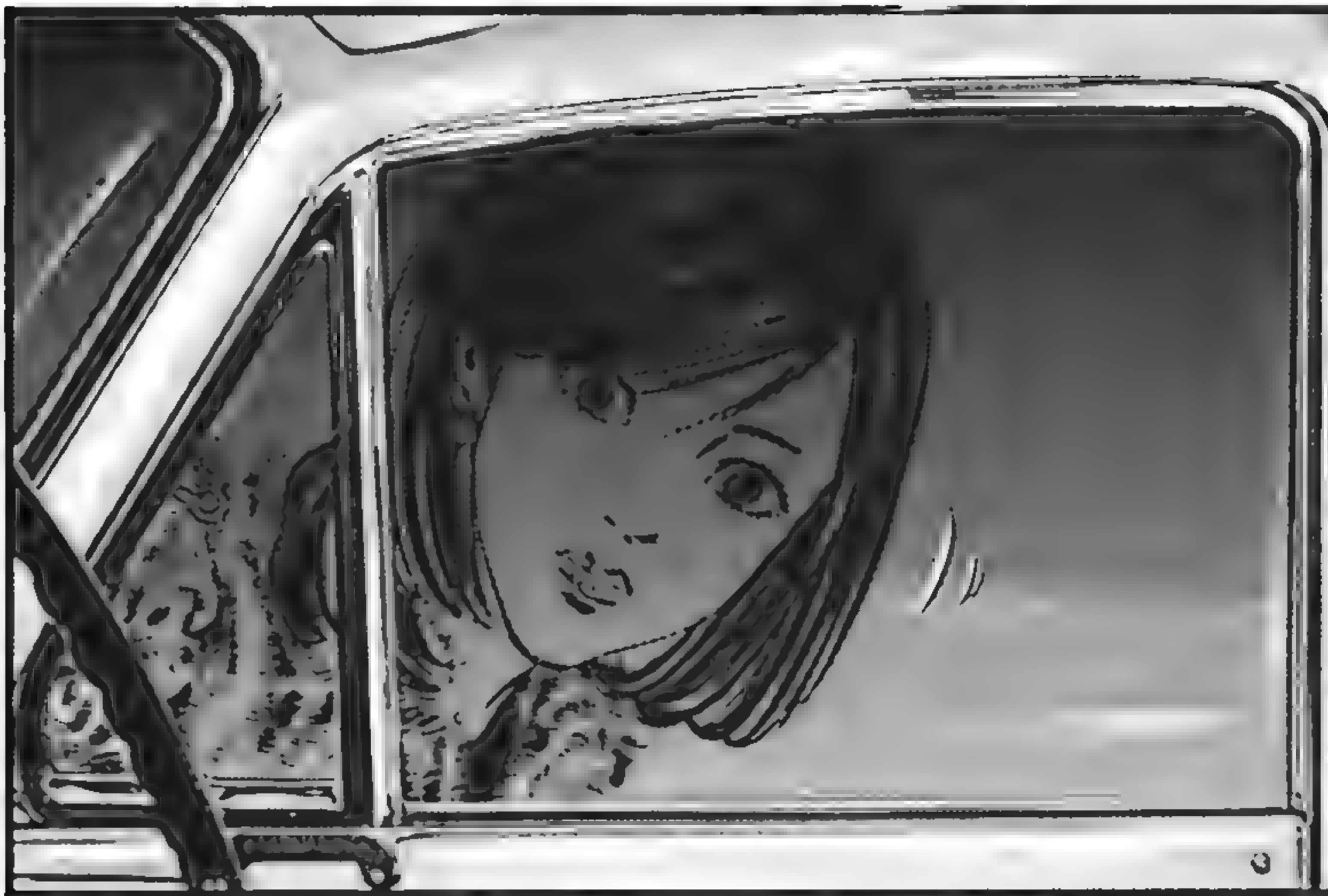




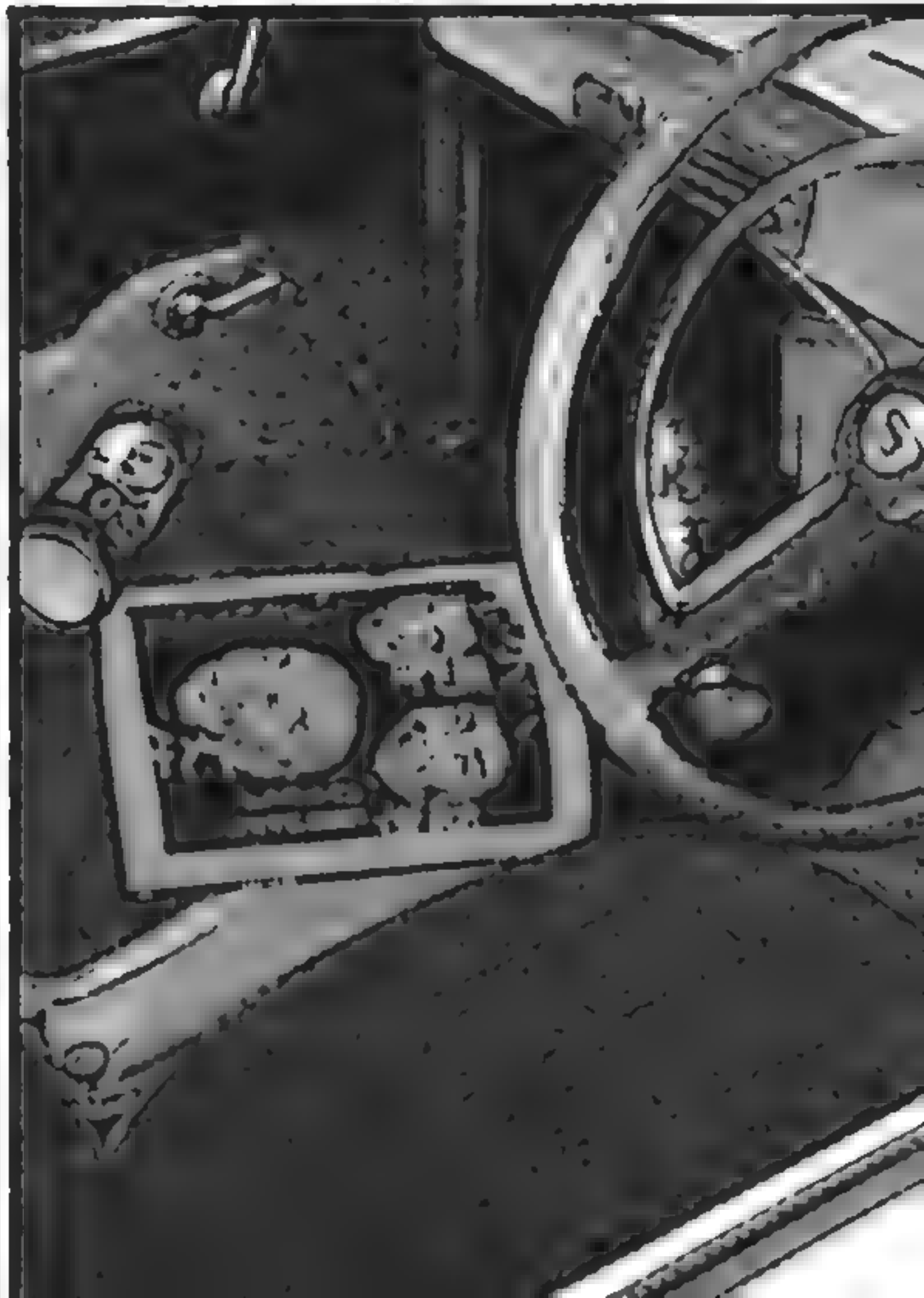




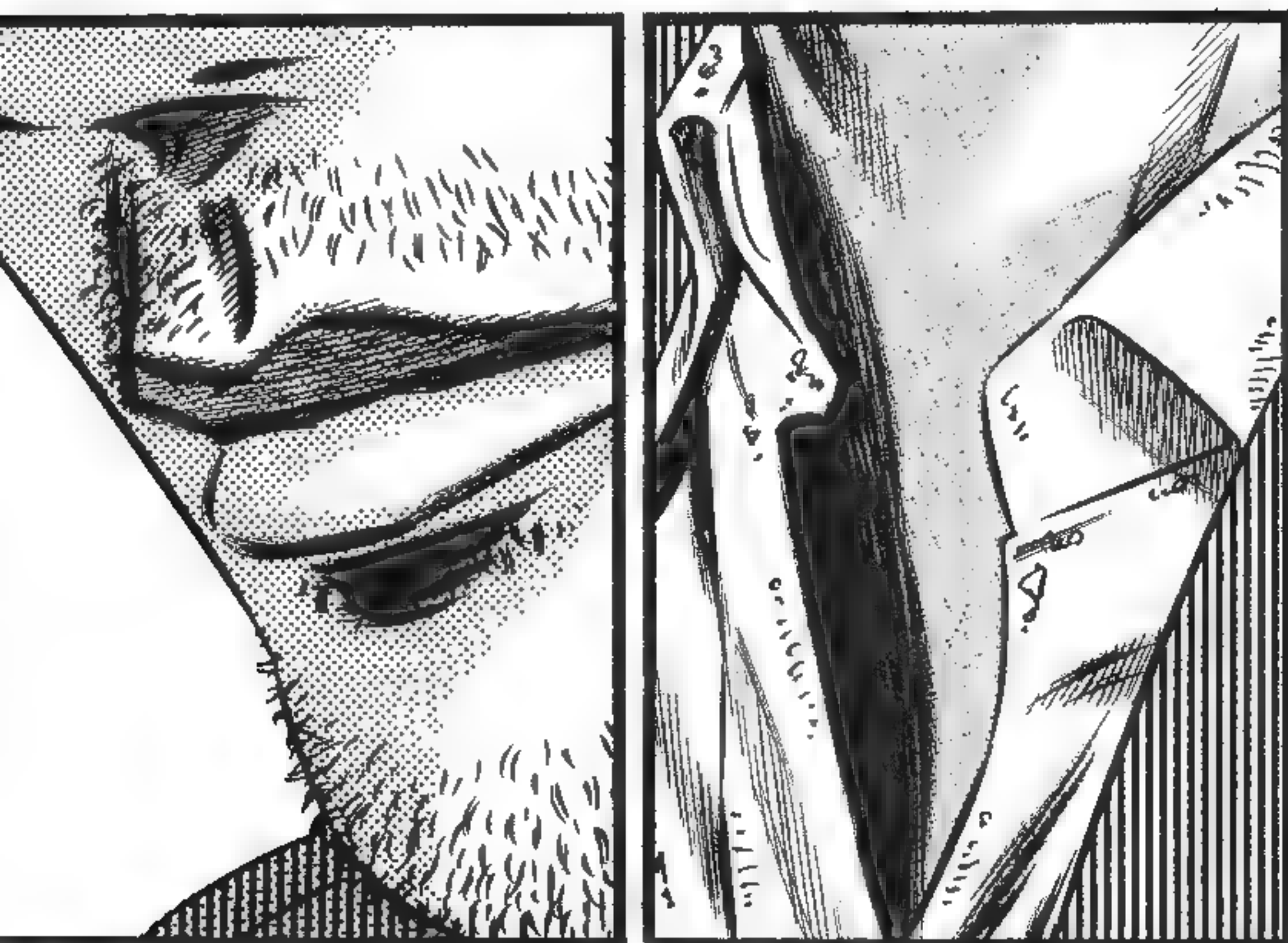
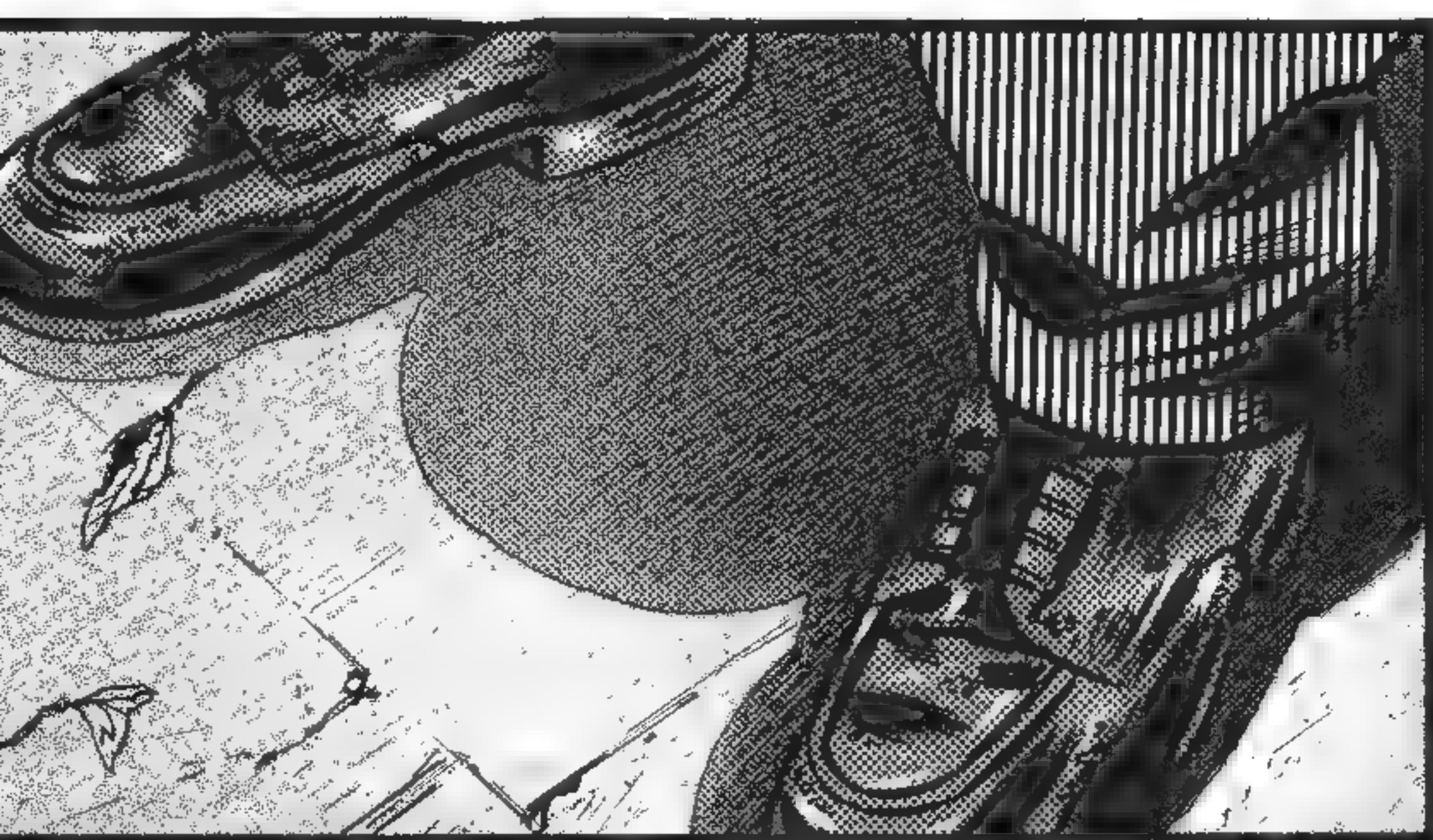




Magazine Yinling



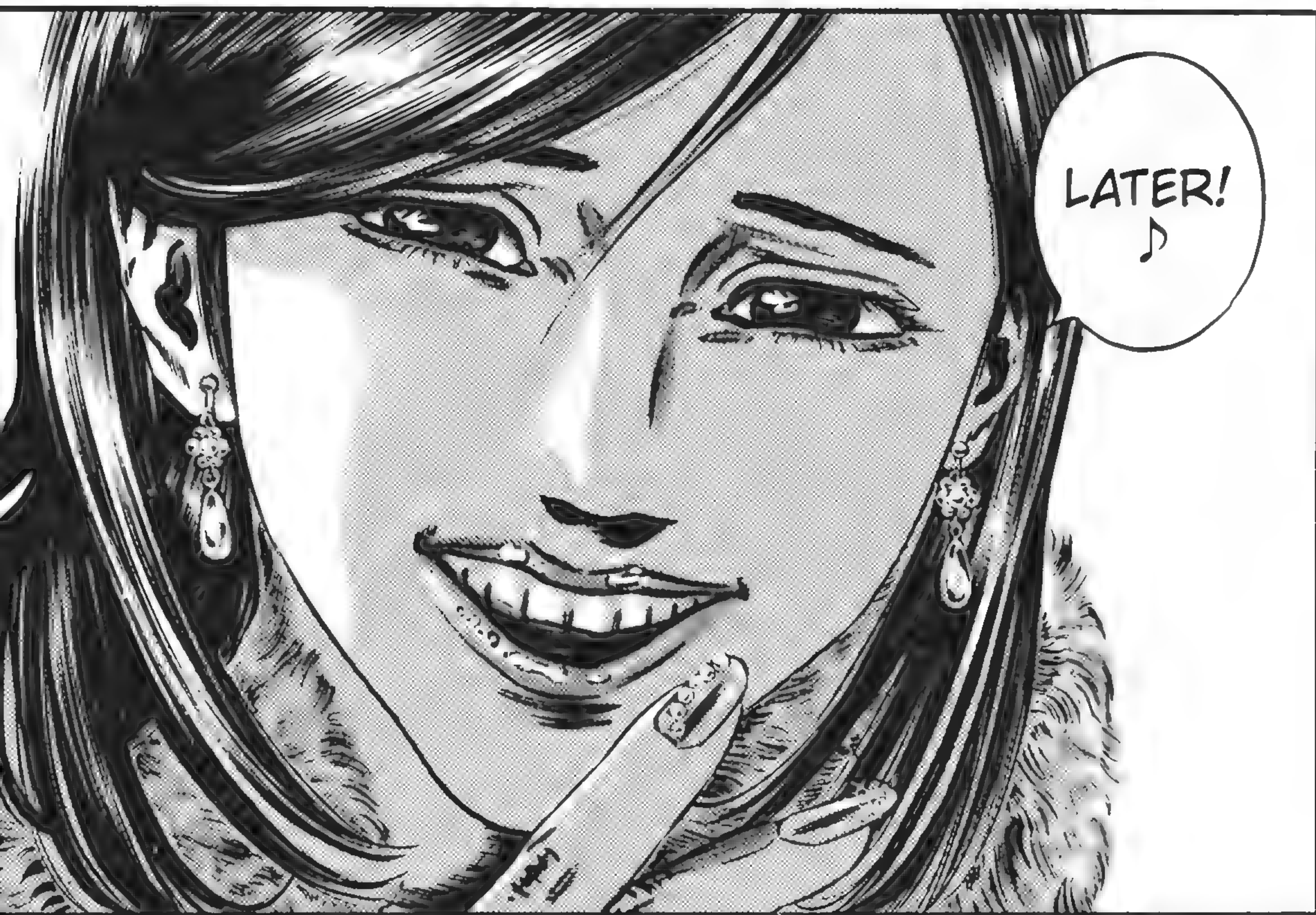




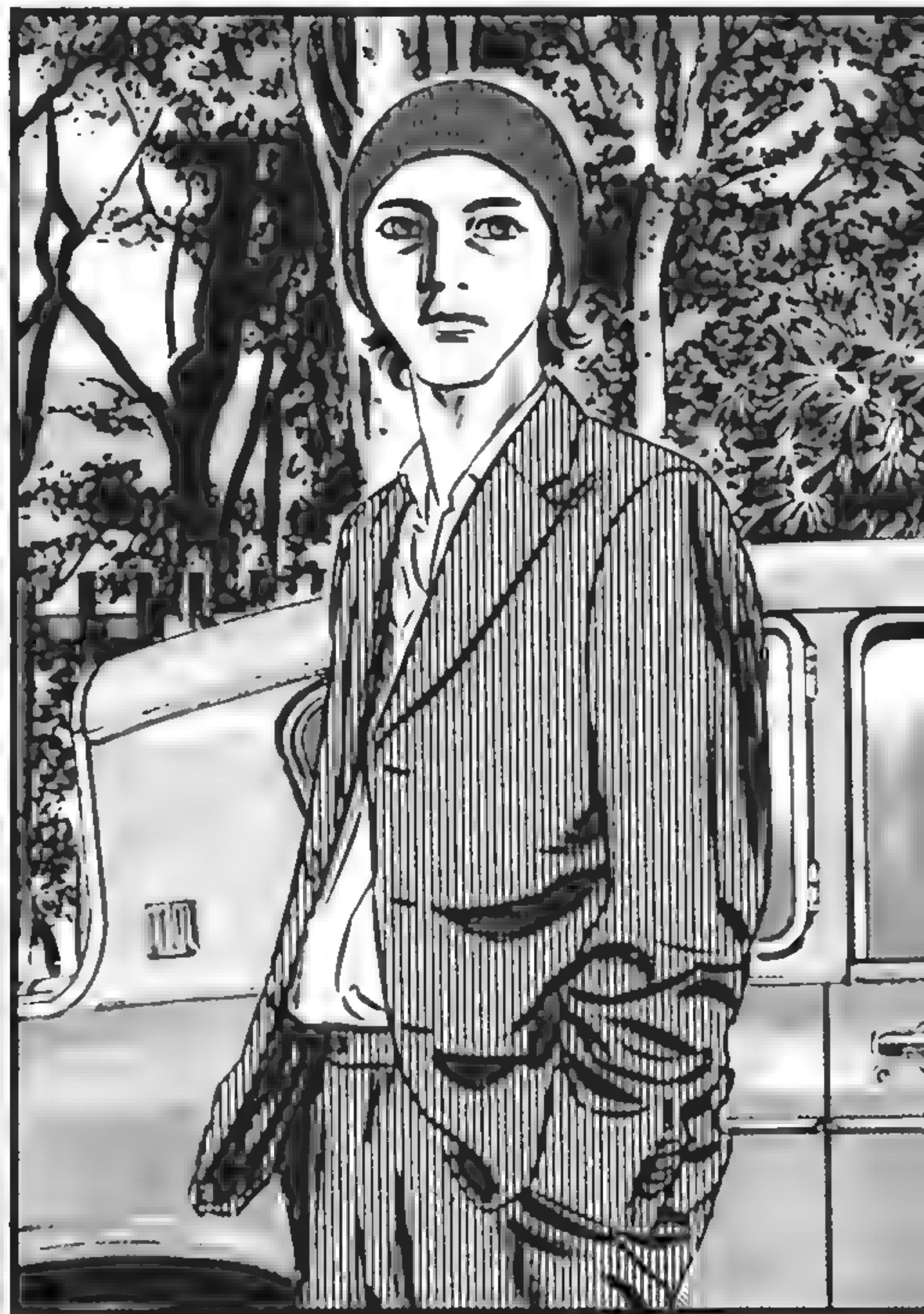




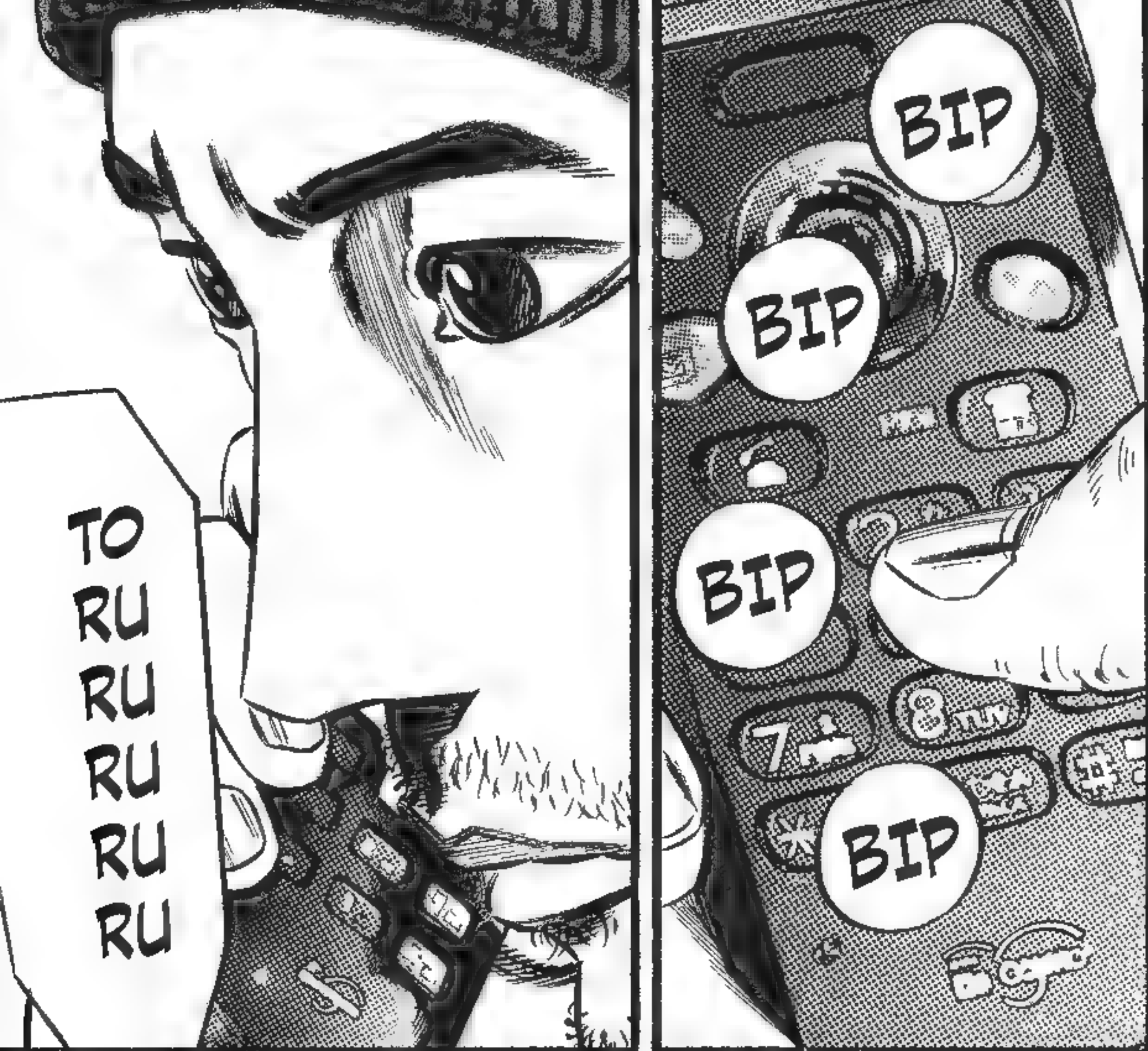




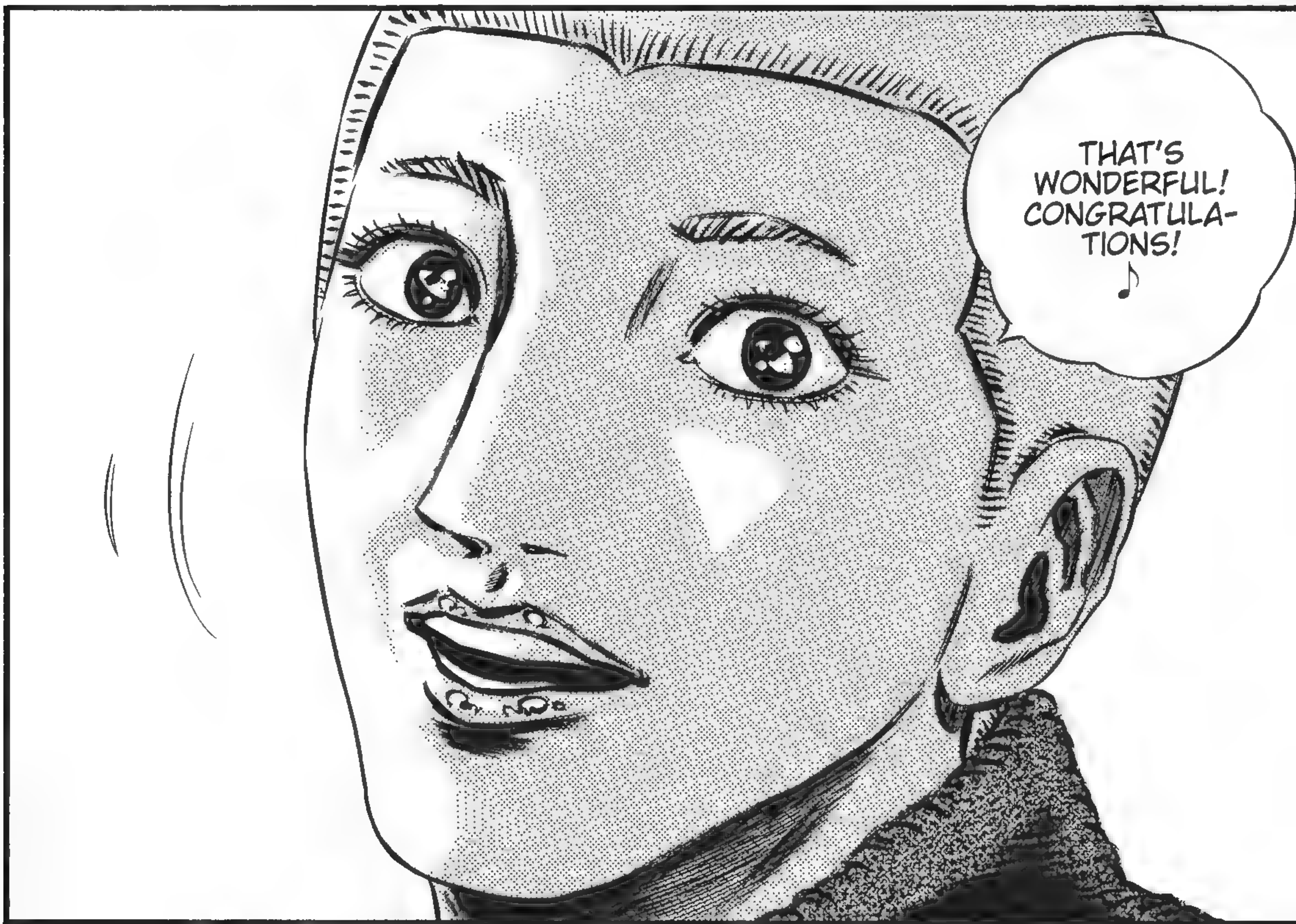














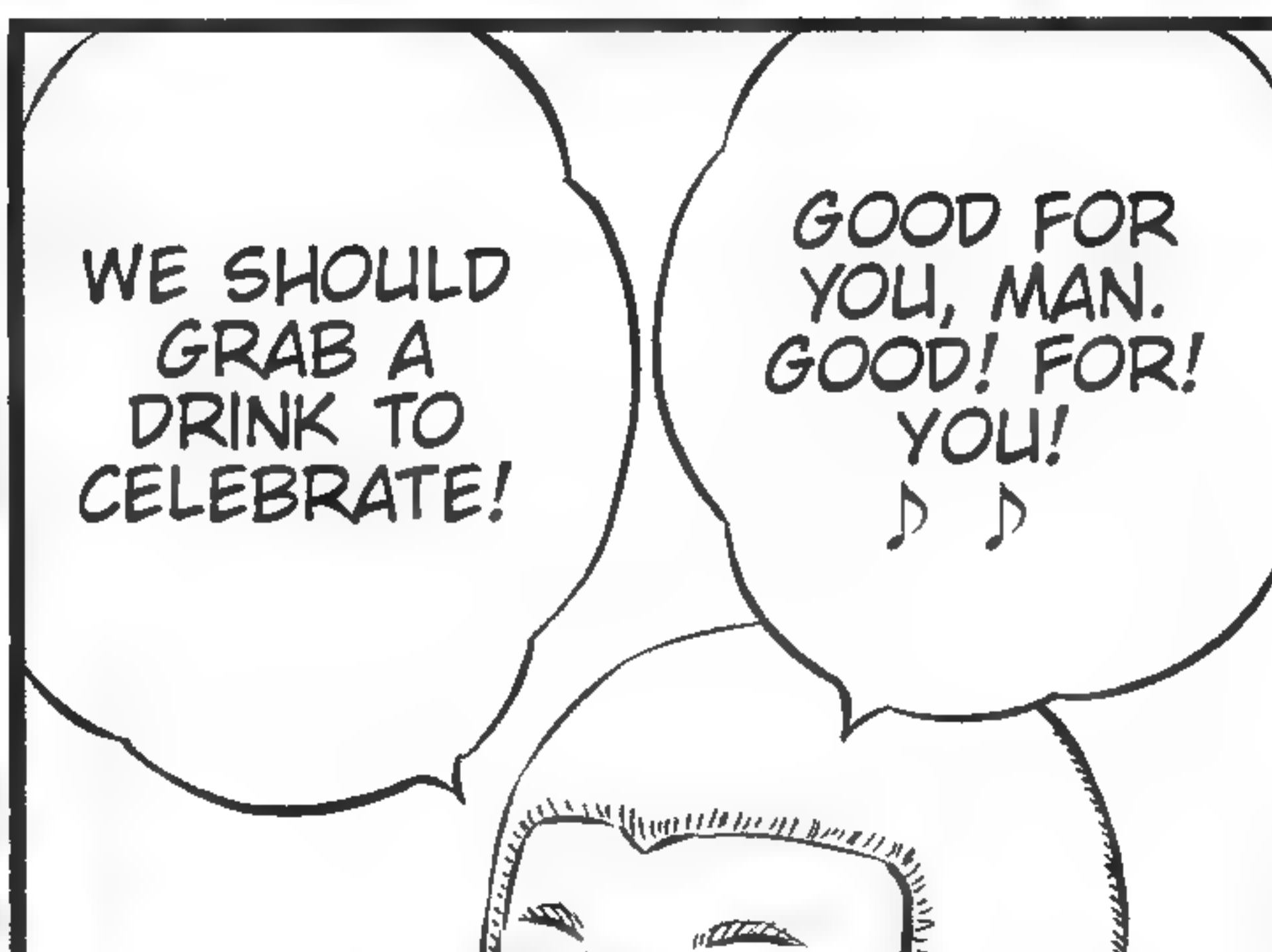


WHAT  
...?

THAT  
MEANS YOUR  
EMOTIONAL  
ISSUES HAVE  
BEEN FIXED,  
RIGHT?



ARE YOU  
KIDDING?  
I HAVEN'T  
SOLVED  
SHIT!



WE SHOULD  
GRAB A  
DRINK TO  
CELEBRATE!

GOOD FOR  
YOU, MAN.  
GOOD! FOR!  
YOU!  
♪ ♪

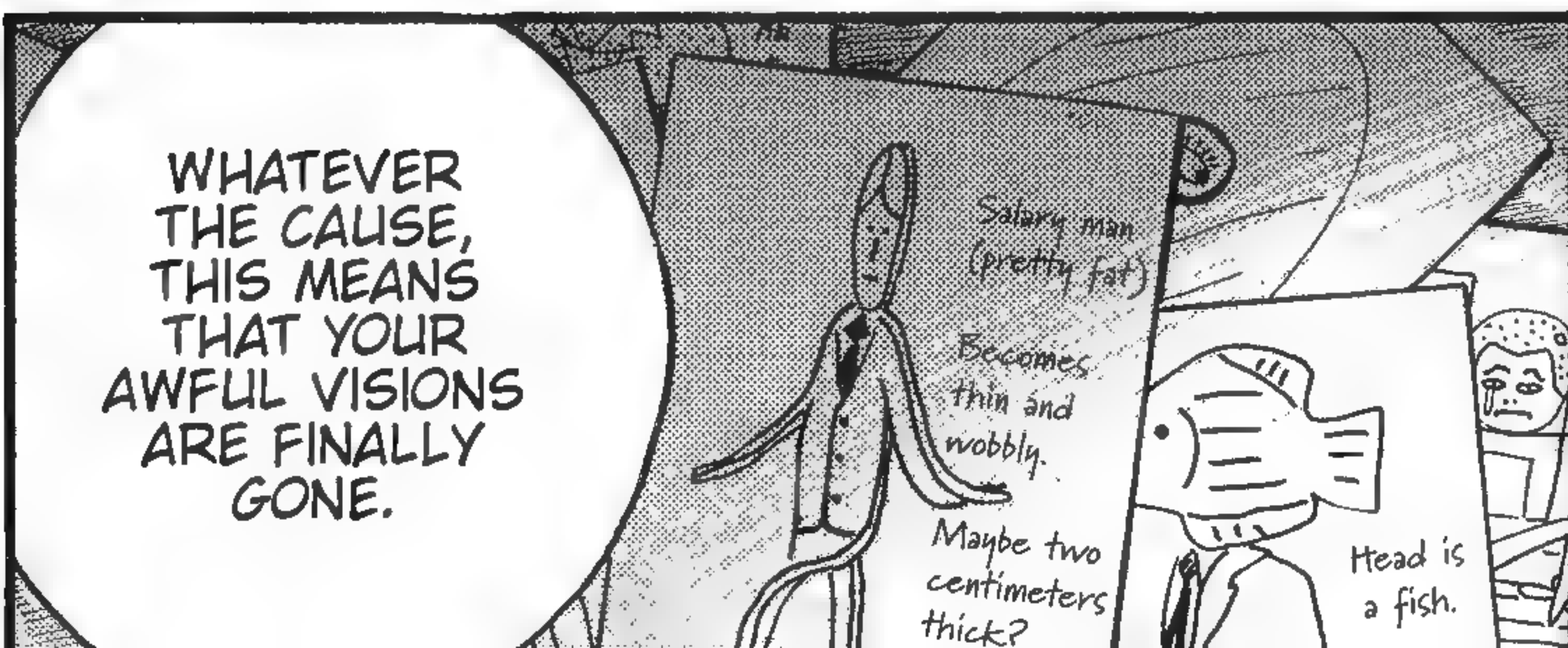


BUT  
I'VE GOT A  
FEELING IT'S  
SOMETHING  
MORE...  
PHYSICAL  
THAN THAT.

I'M NOT  
CERTAIN  
WHAT  
MADE THEM  
VANISH...











THOUGH...  
THEY DO SAY YOU  
DON'T KNOW WHAT  
YOU'VE GOT UNTIL  
IT'S GONE.



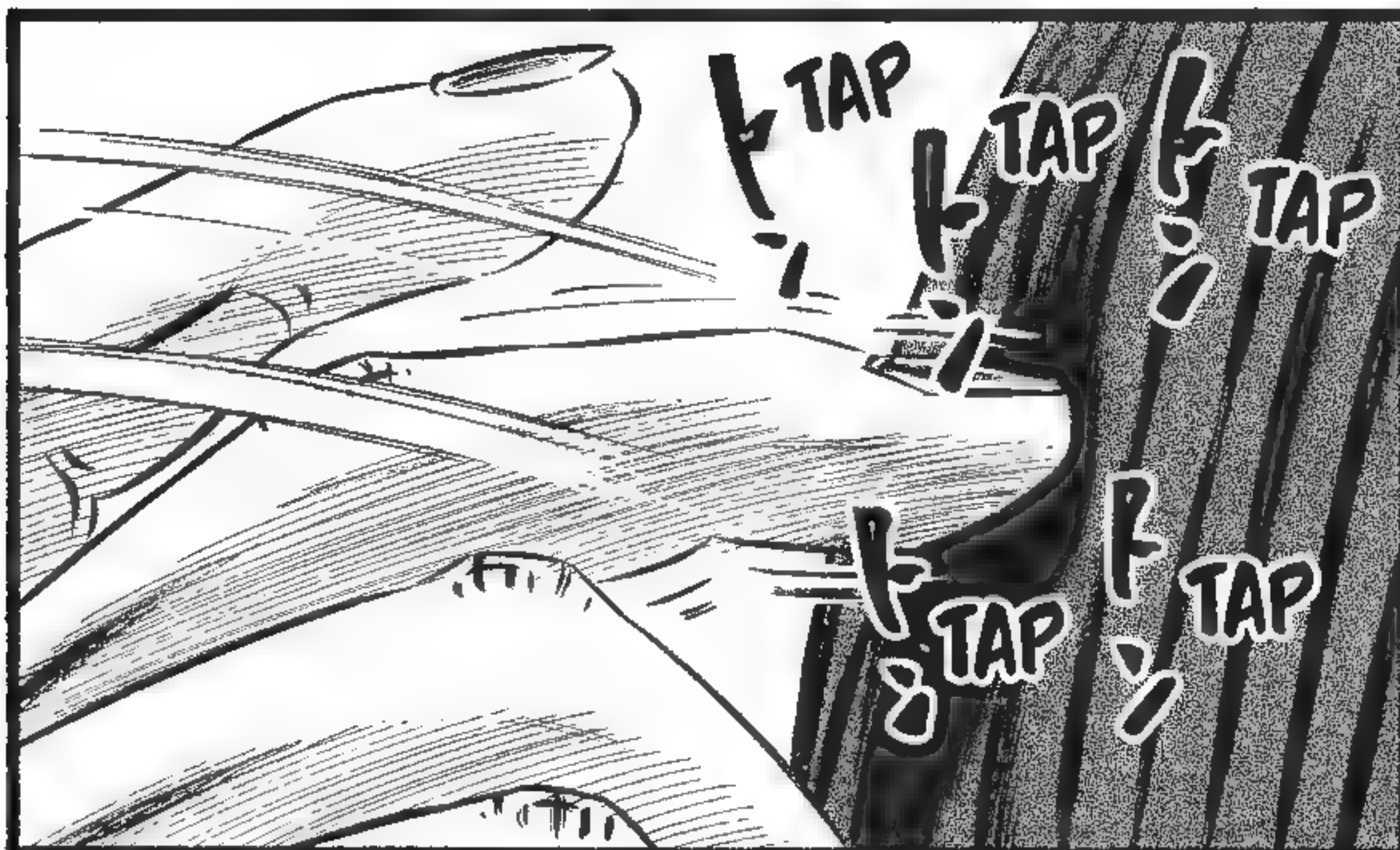
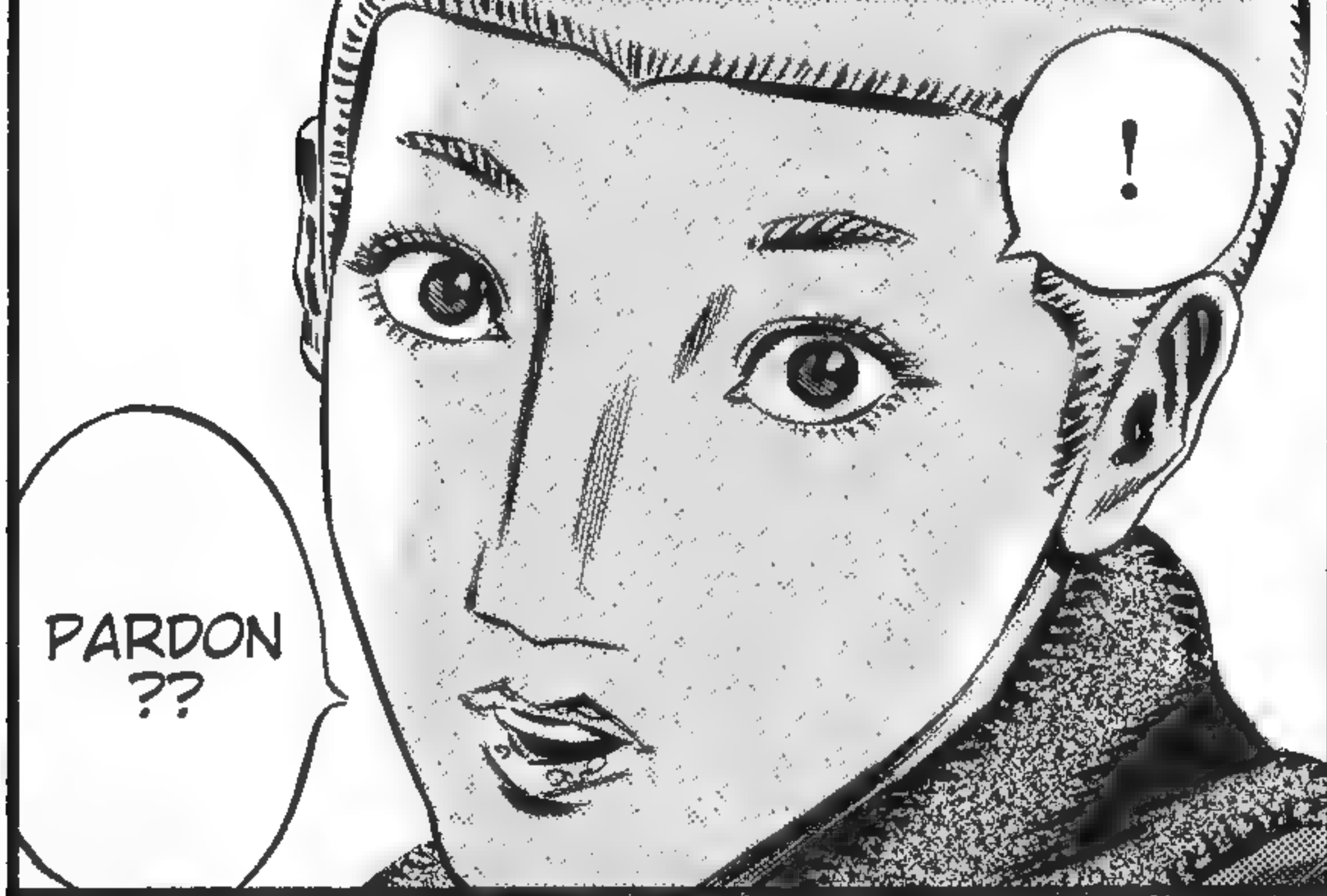
AREN'T  
YOU  
HAPPY?  
THIS IS  
GREAT!

COME ON,  
NAKOSHI-  
SAN!

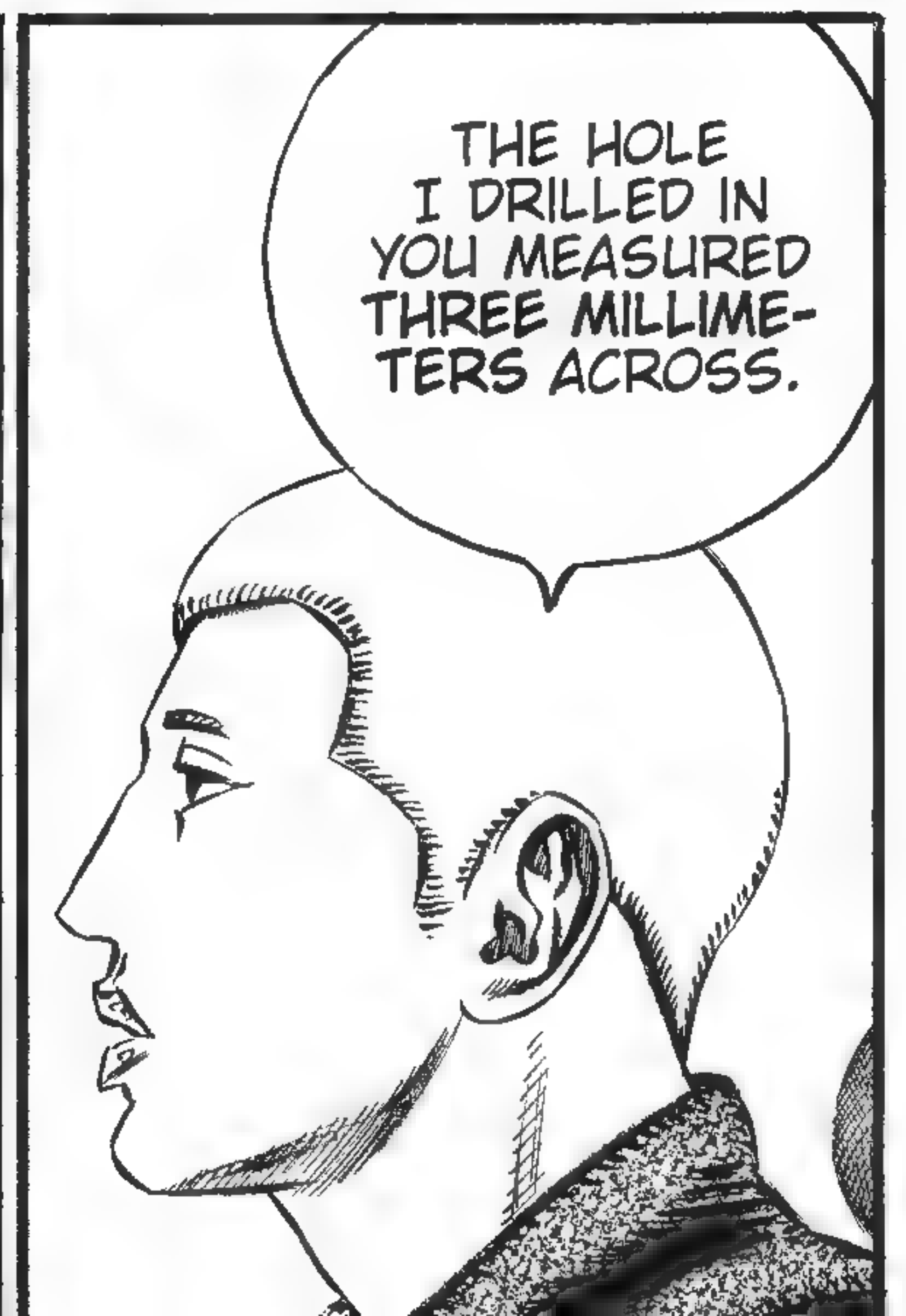
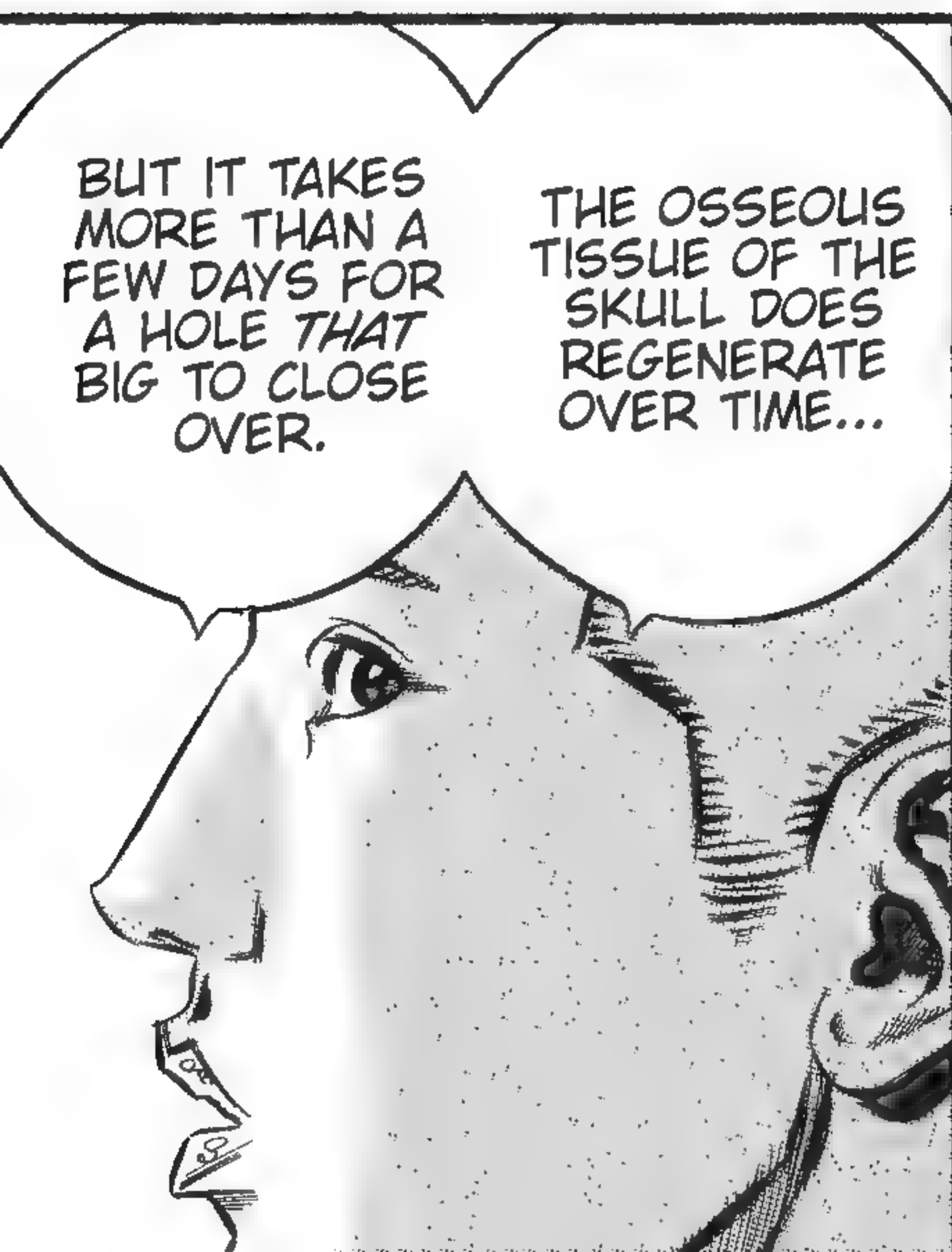


FEELING  
LONELY  
WITHOUT  
YOUR  
IMAGINARY  
FRIENDS?









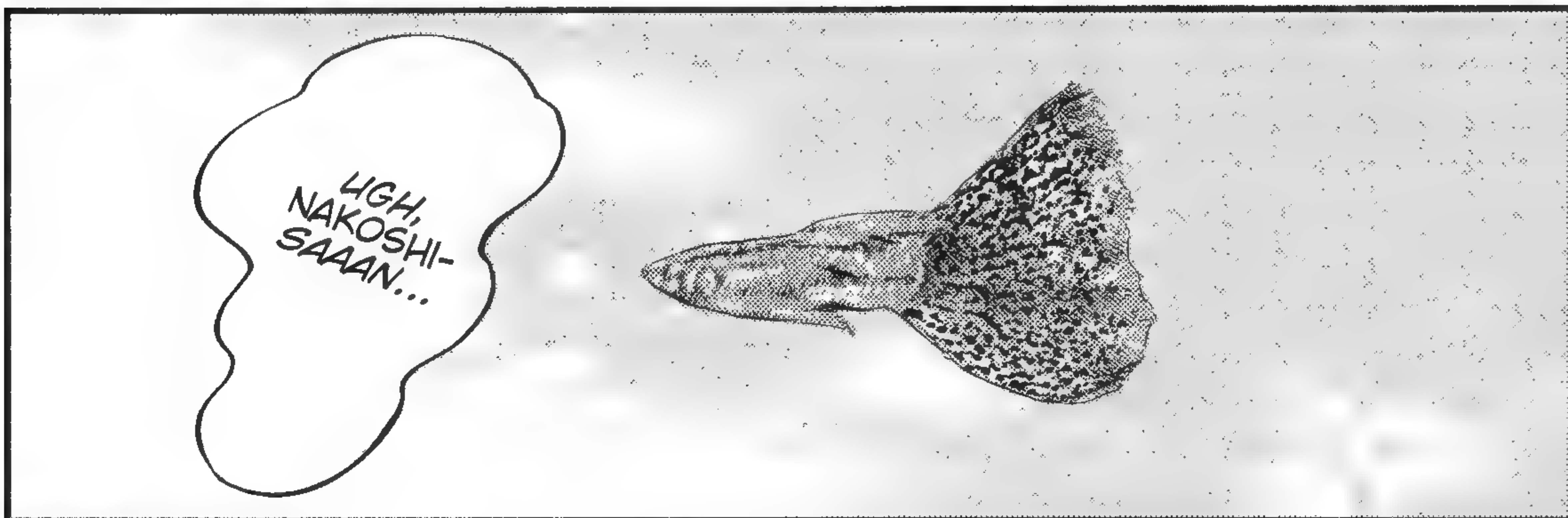




STOP  
YAPPING,  
SLICE ME  
UP, AND  
CHECK!



F  
W  
I  
P



UGH,  
NAKOSHI-  
SAAAN...



YOU  
SELFISH  
PRICK.



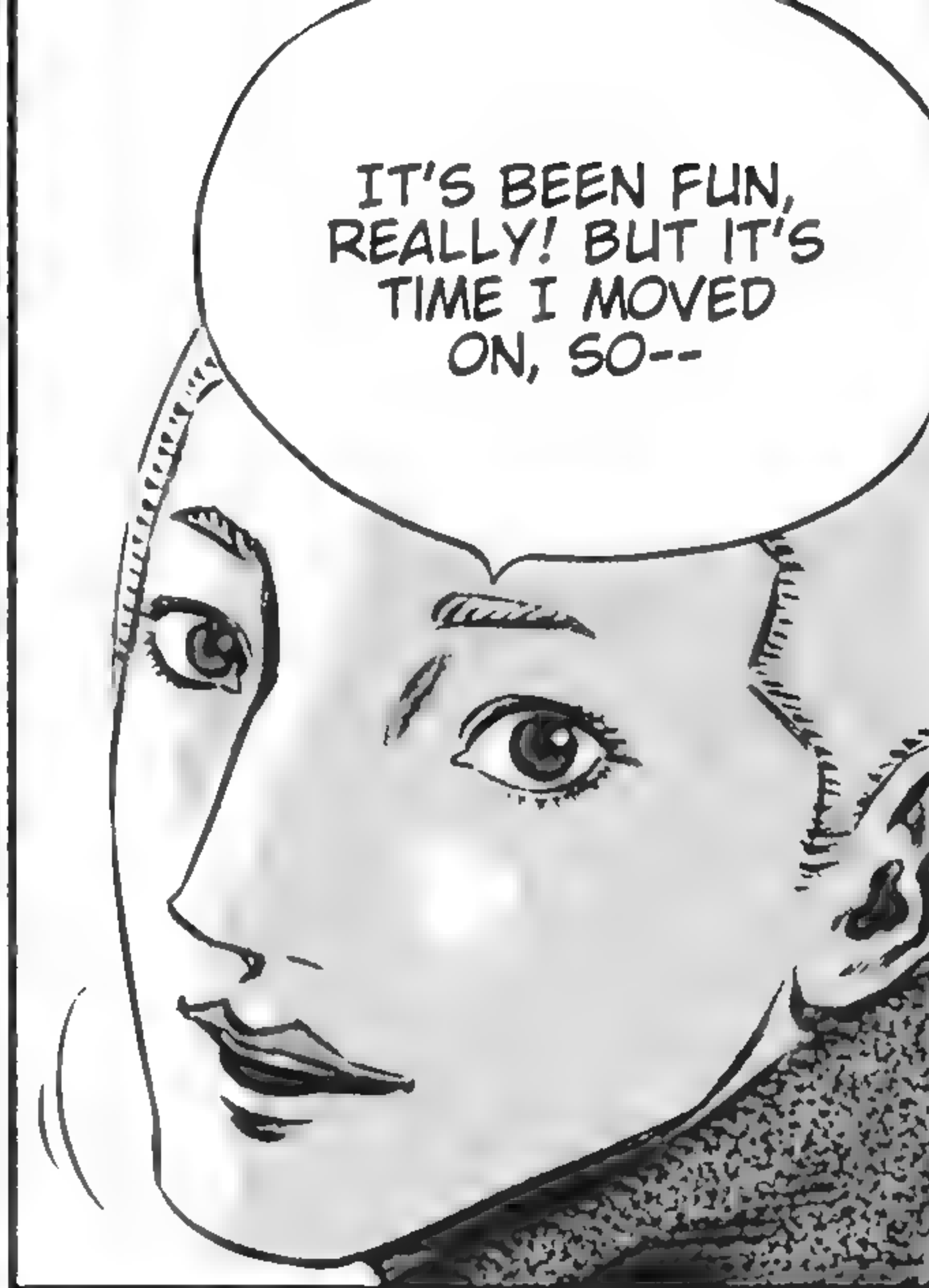
I MEAN,  
I'D LOVE TO  
HELP AND  
ALL, BUT  
LIKE...NOT IF  
IT'S GONNA  
BE THIS BIG  
A HASSLE.

HONESTLY...  
NOW THAT  
WE'RE DONE  
WITH THE  
ME STUFF, I  
KINDA JUST  
DON'T GIVE  
A CRAP.

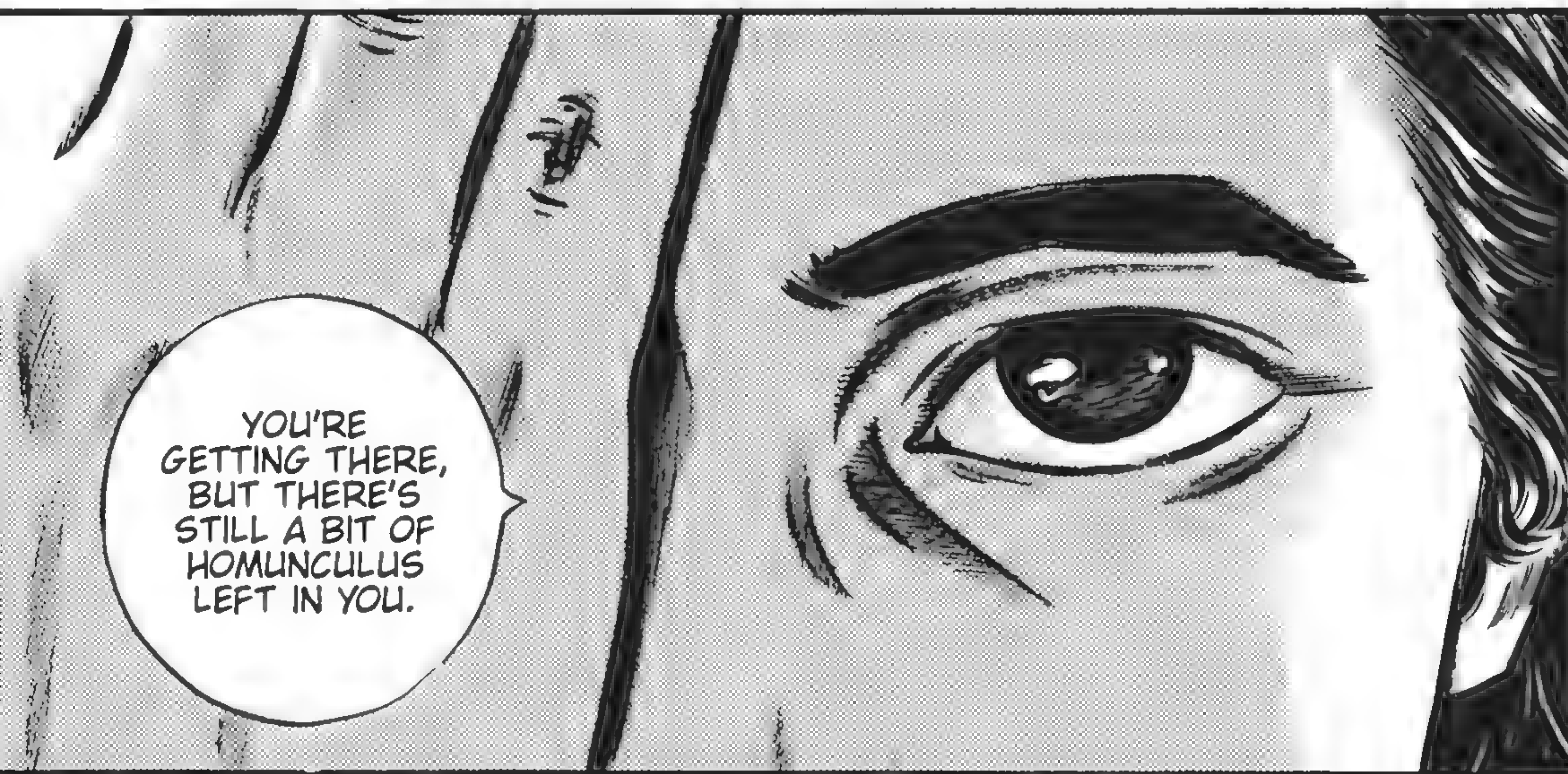




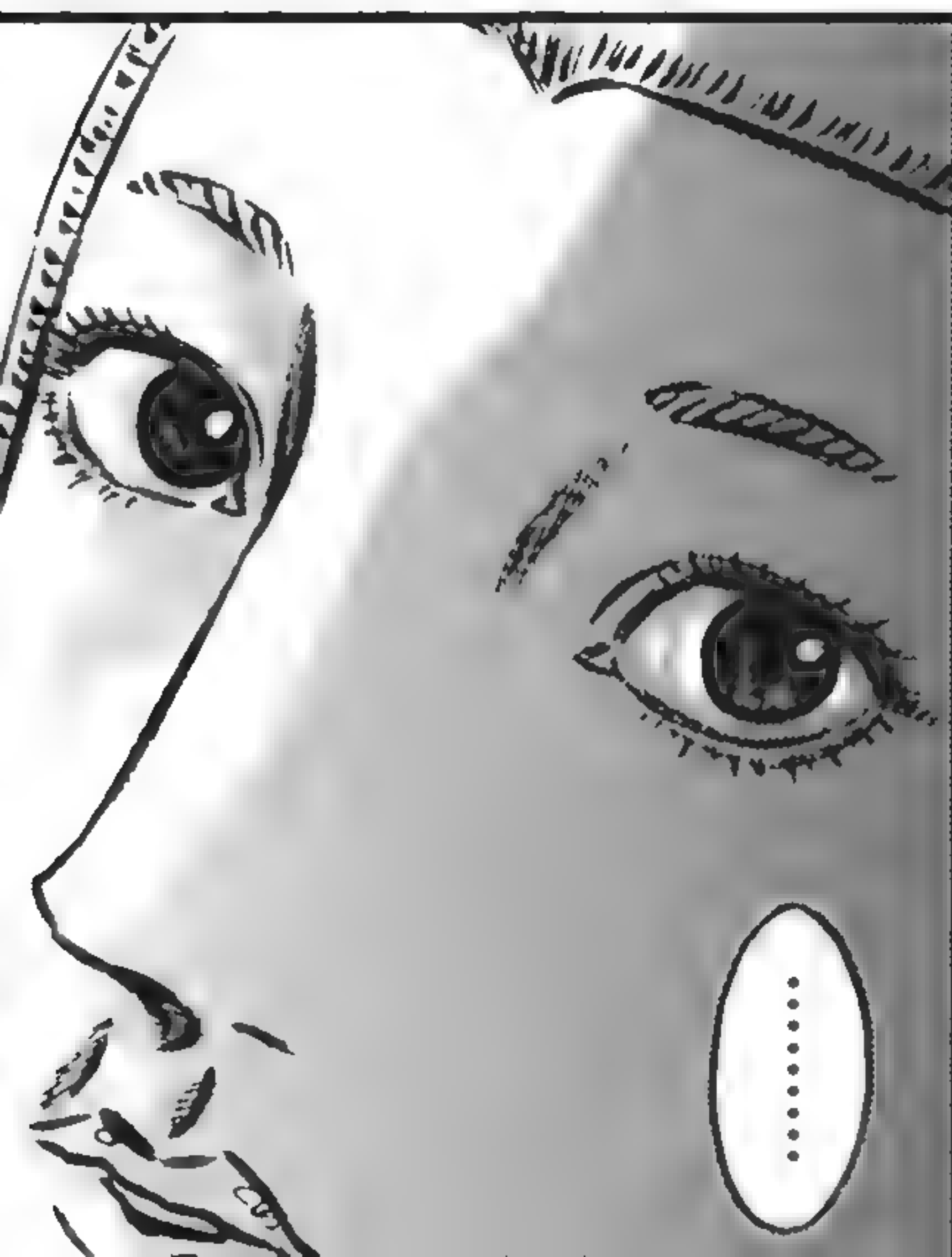
YOUR  
ISSUES  
AREN'T  
SOLVED  
YET,  
EITHER.



IT'S BEEN FUN,  
REALLY! BUT IT'S  
TIME I MOVED  
ON, SO--



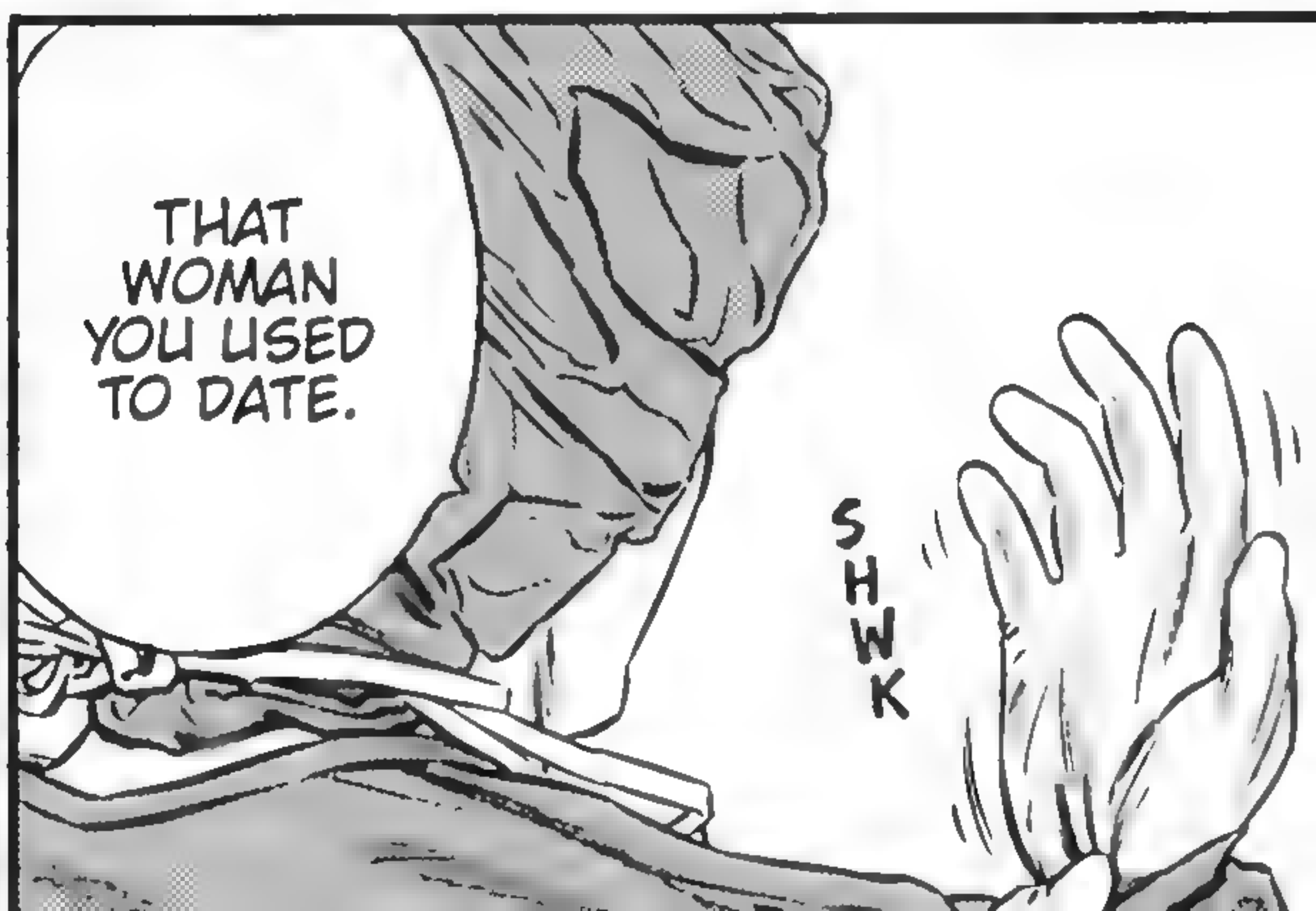
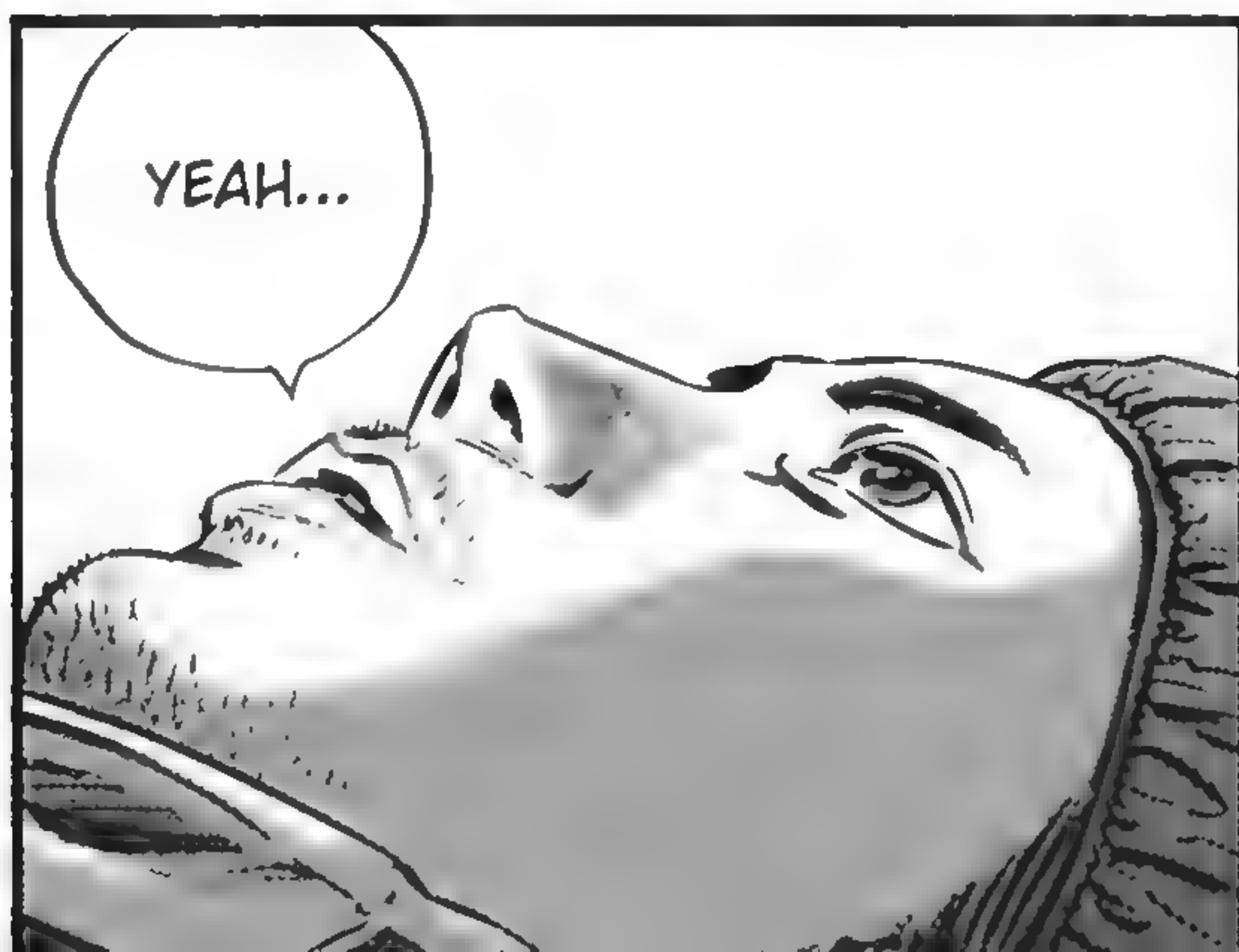
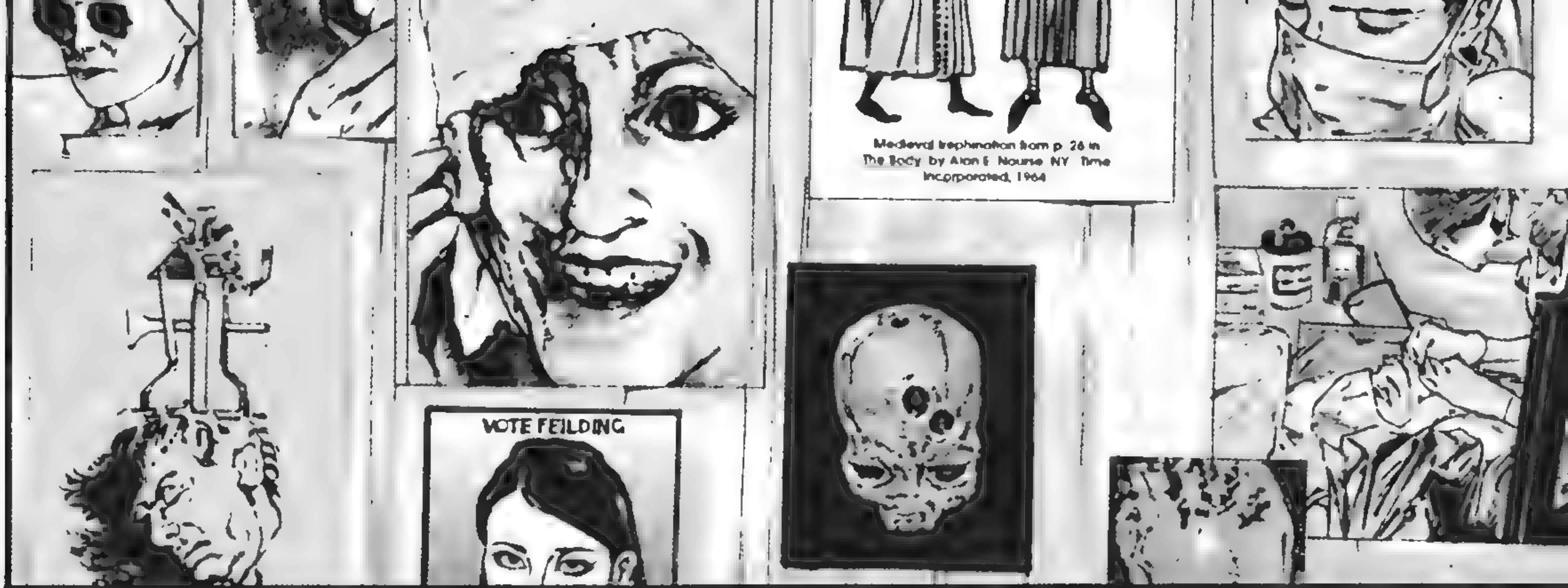
YOU'RE  
GETTING THERE,  
BUT THERE'S  
STILL A BIT OF  
HOMUNCULUS  
LEFT IN YOU.



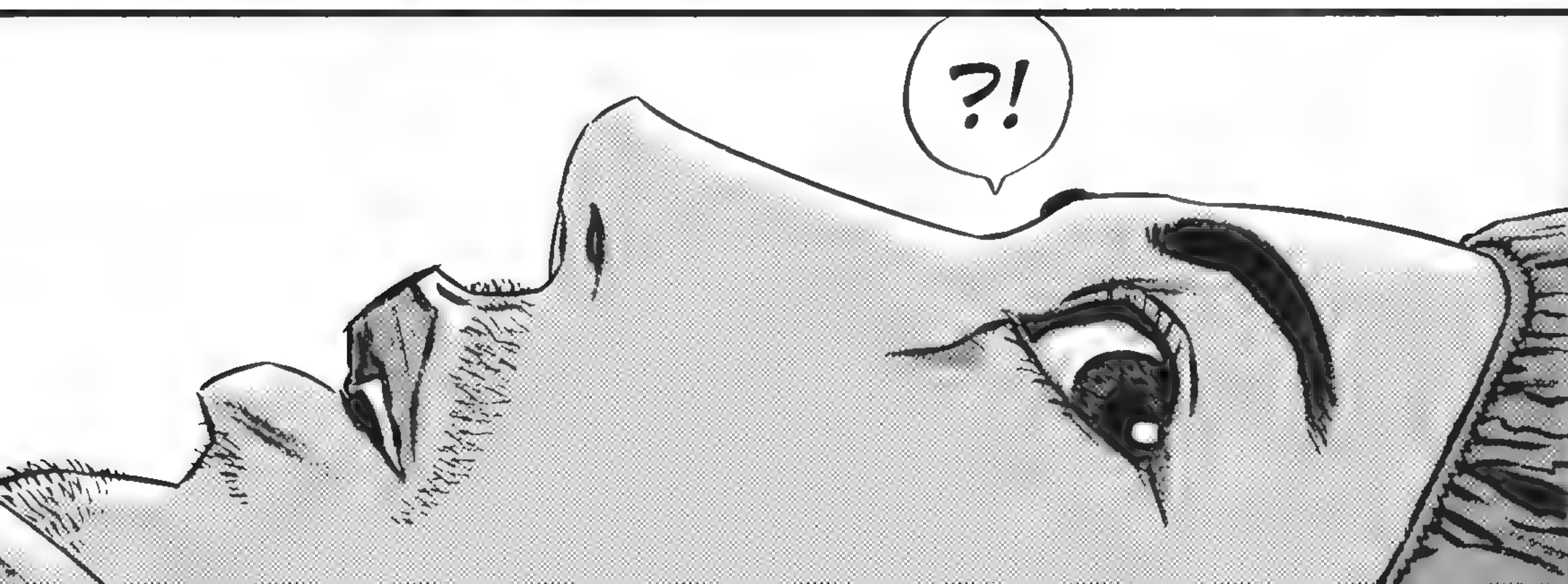
AND IF YOU  
DON'T FIX  
THIS, YOU'LL  
NEVER FIND  
ANYONE ELSE  
WHO CAN!

BUT  
RIGHT NOW,  
I CAN'T  
SEE IT!

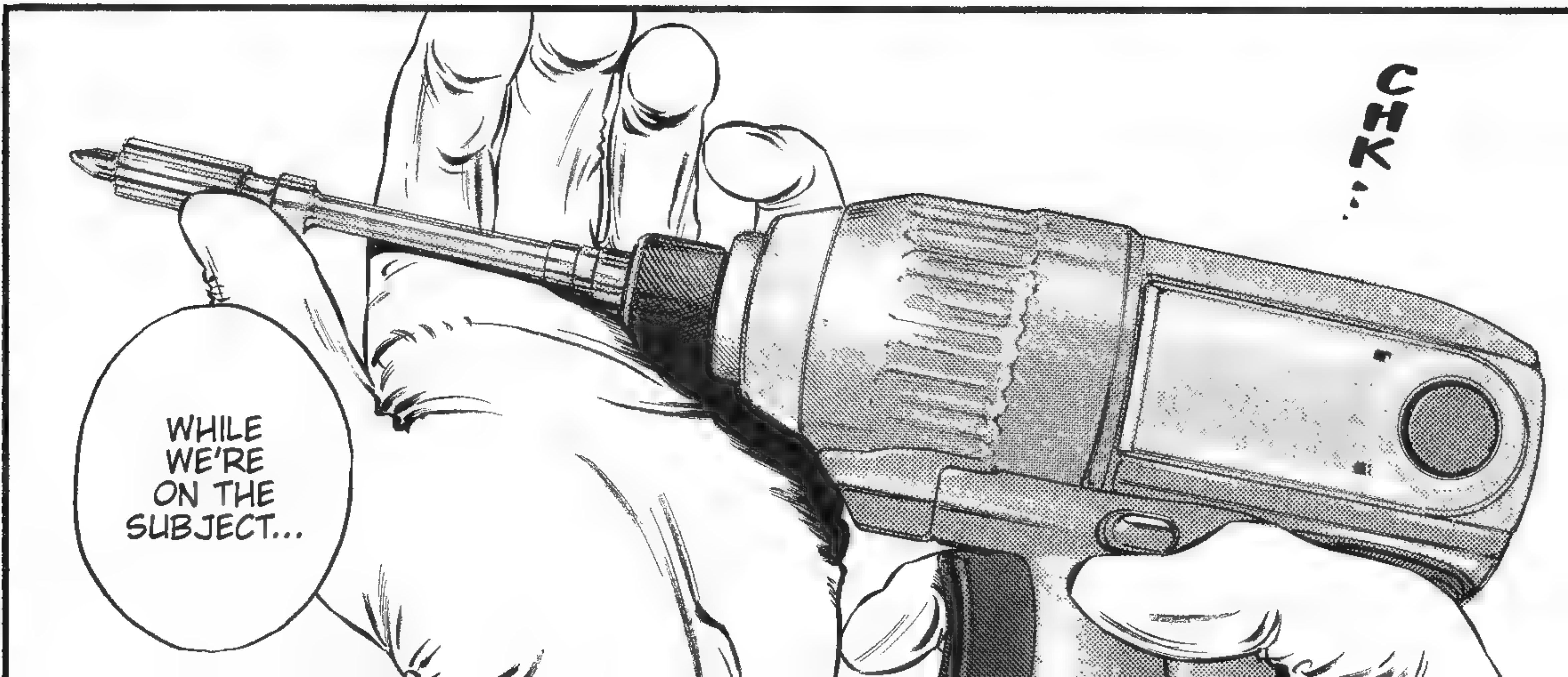
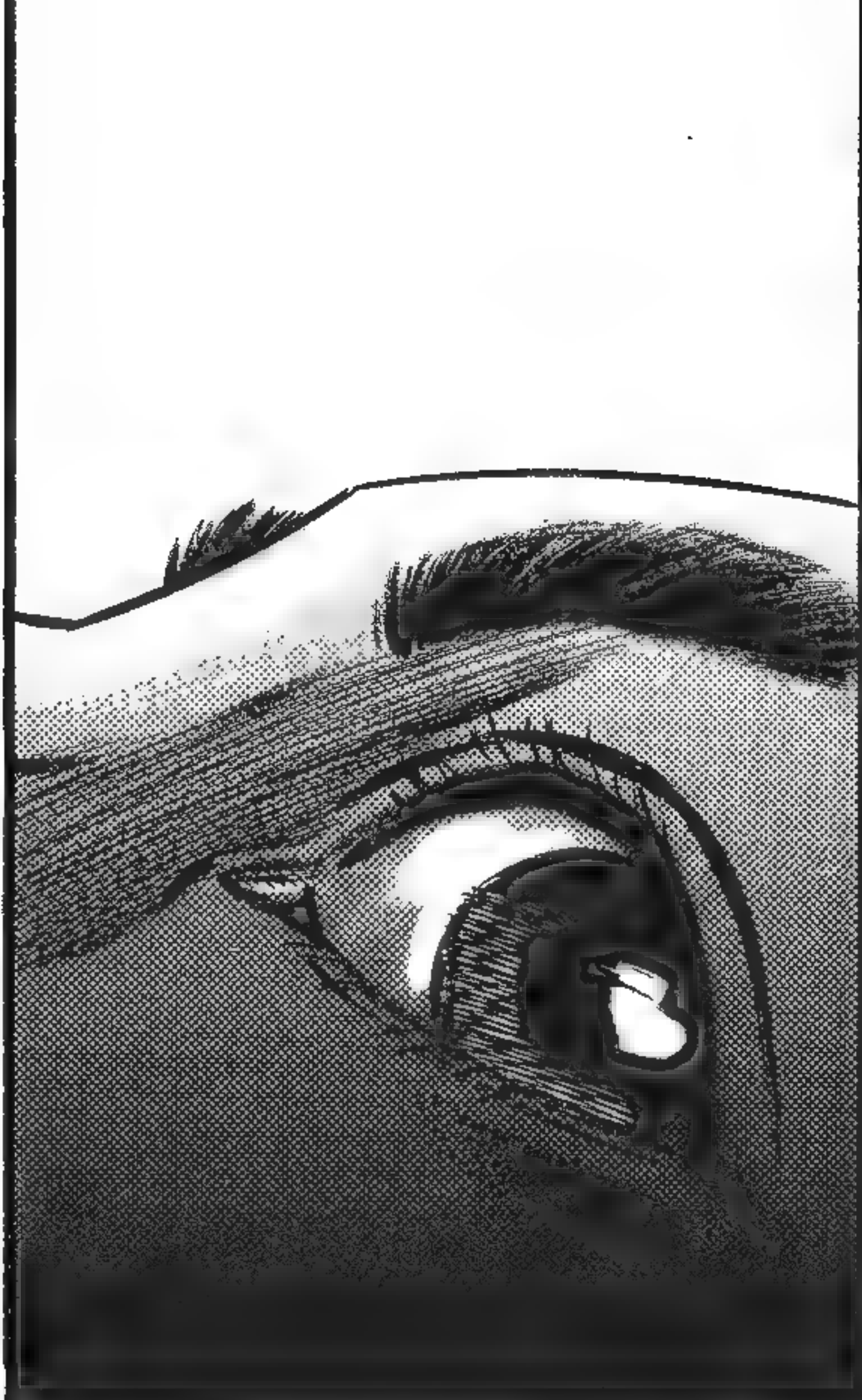










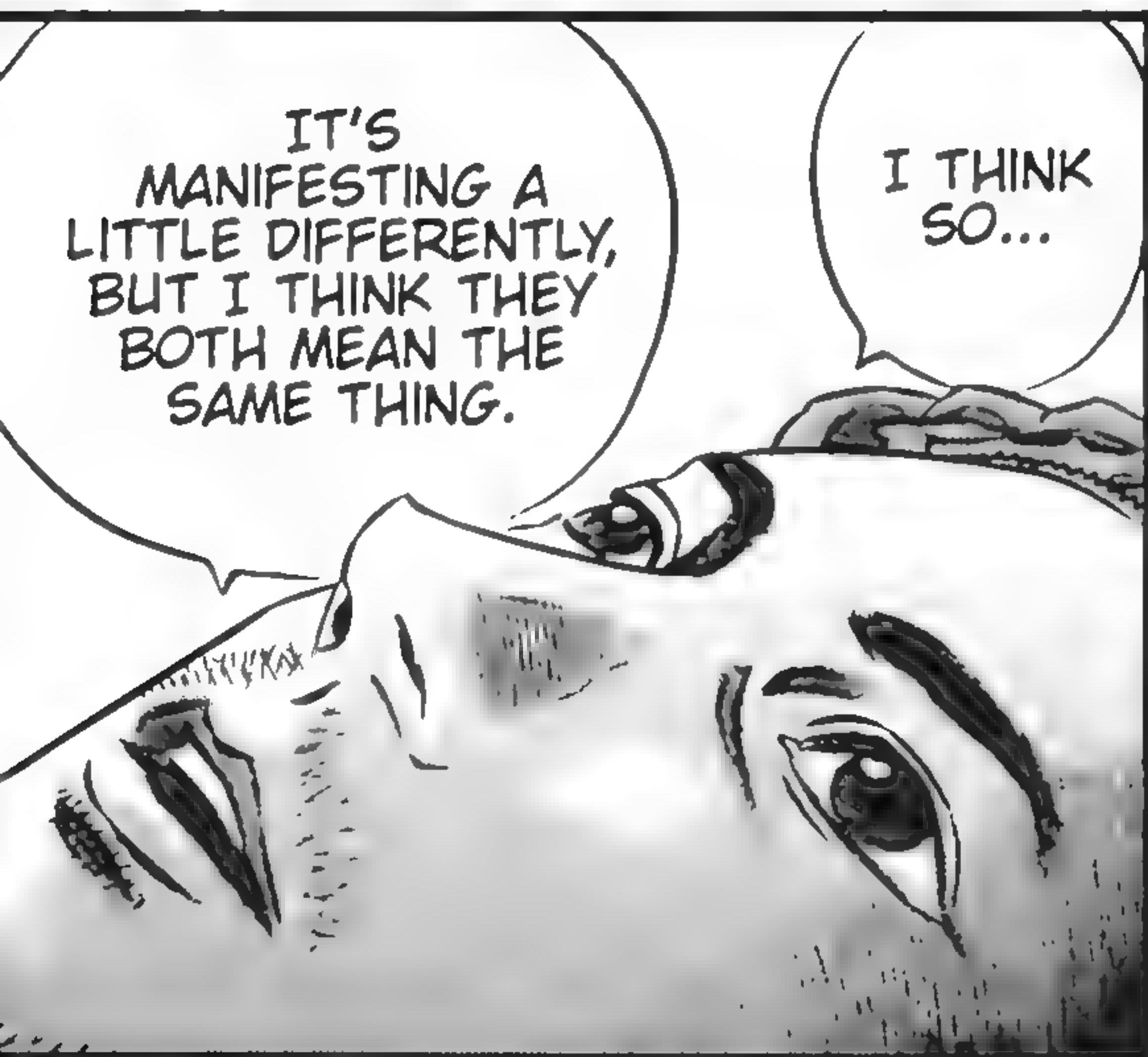






NOT TO PRY,  
BUT WAS IT AT  
LEAST *SIMILAR*  
TO THE ONE  
YOU SEE FOR  
YOURSELF?

YOU  
NEVER TOLD  
ME WHAT  
HOMUNCULUS  
SHE SAW  
IN YOU.



IT'S  
MANIFESTING A  
LITTLE DIFFERENTLY,  
BUT I THINK THEY  
BOTH MEAN THE  
SAME THING.

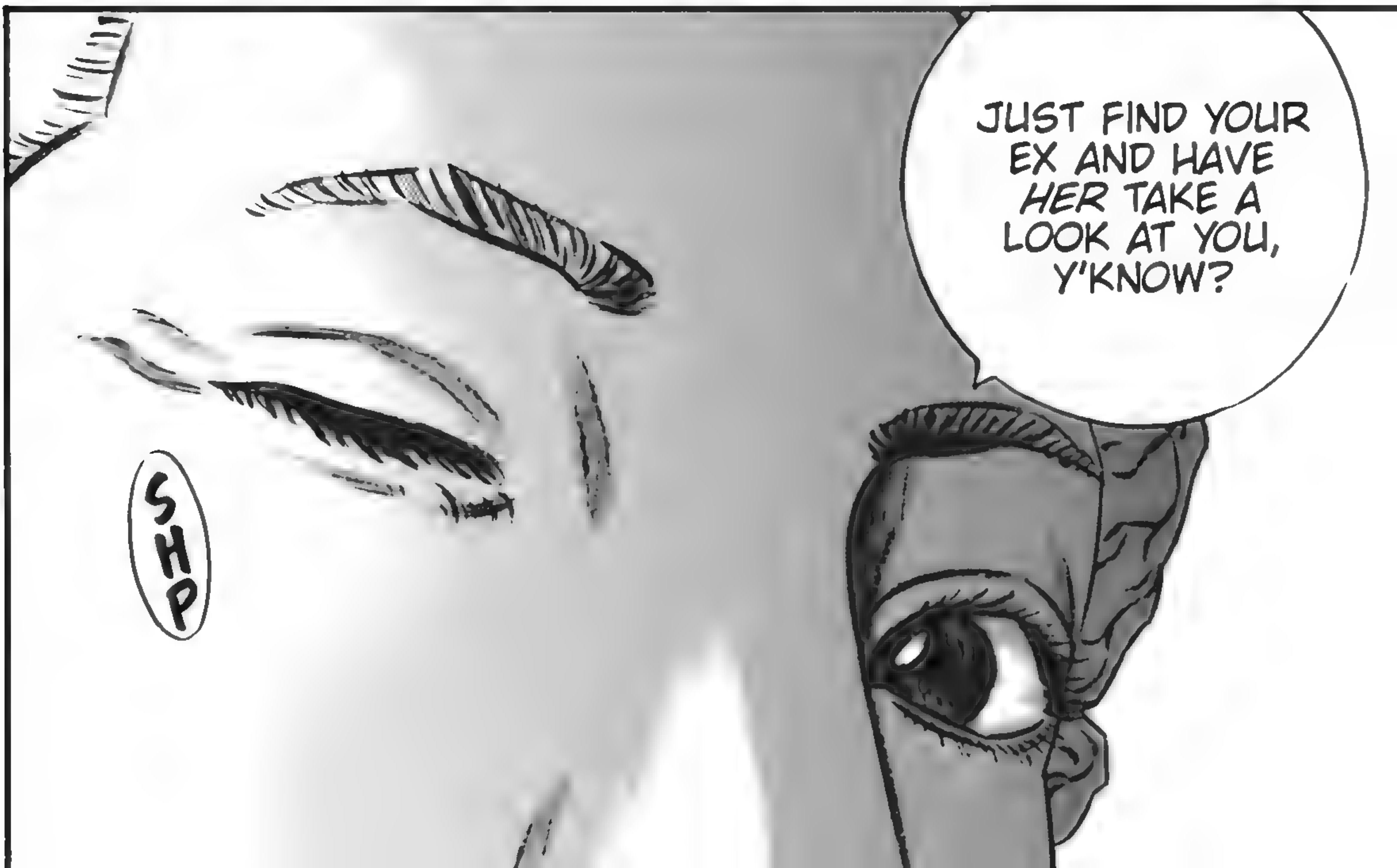
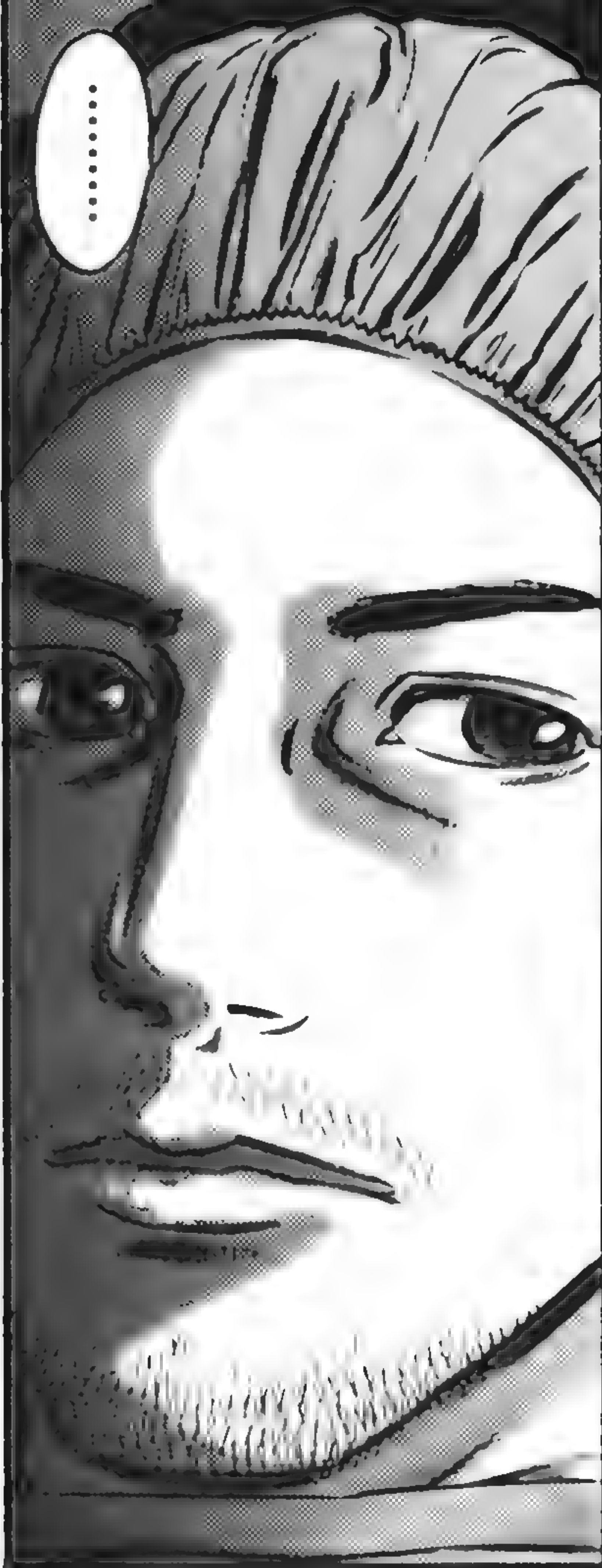
I THINK  
SO...



FLINCH

GWHIIIIIIII

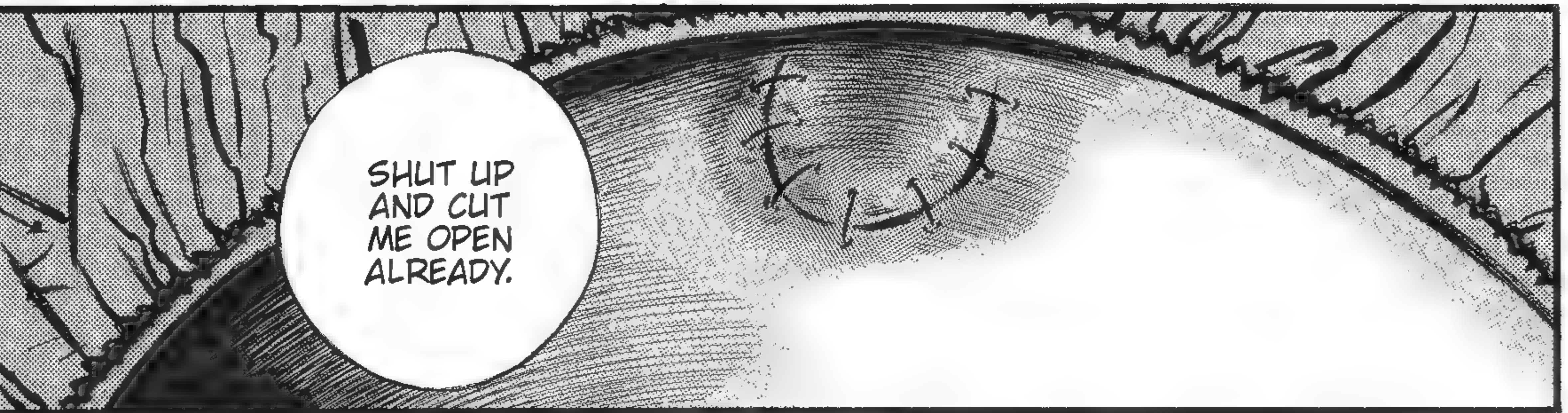








I'M SURE SHE  
AND YOUR  
HOMUNCULUS  
WOULD LOVE TO  
CATCH UP.

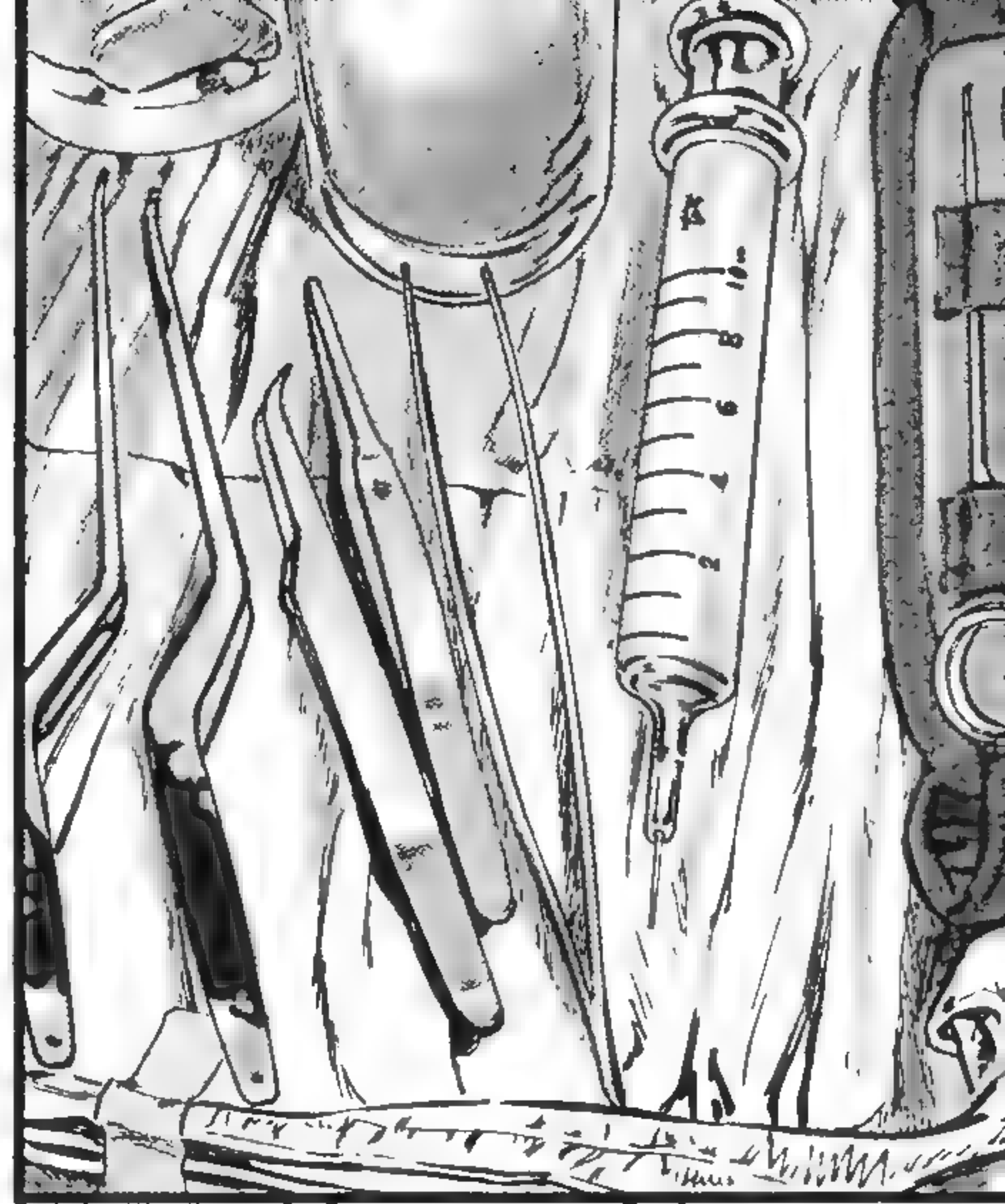
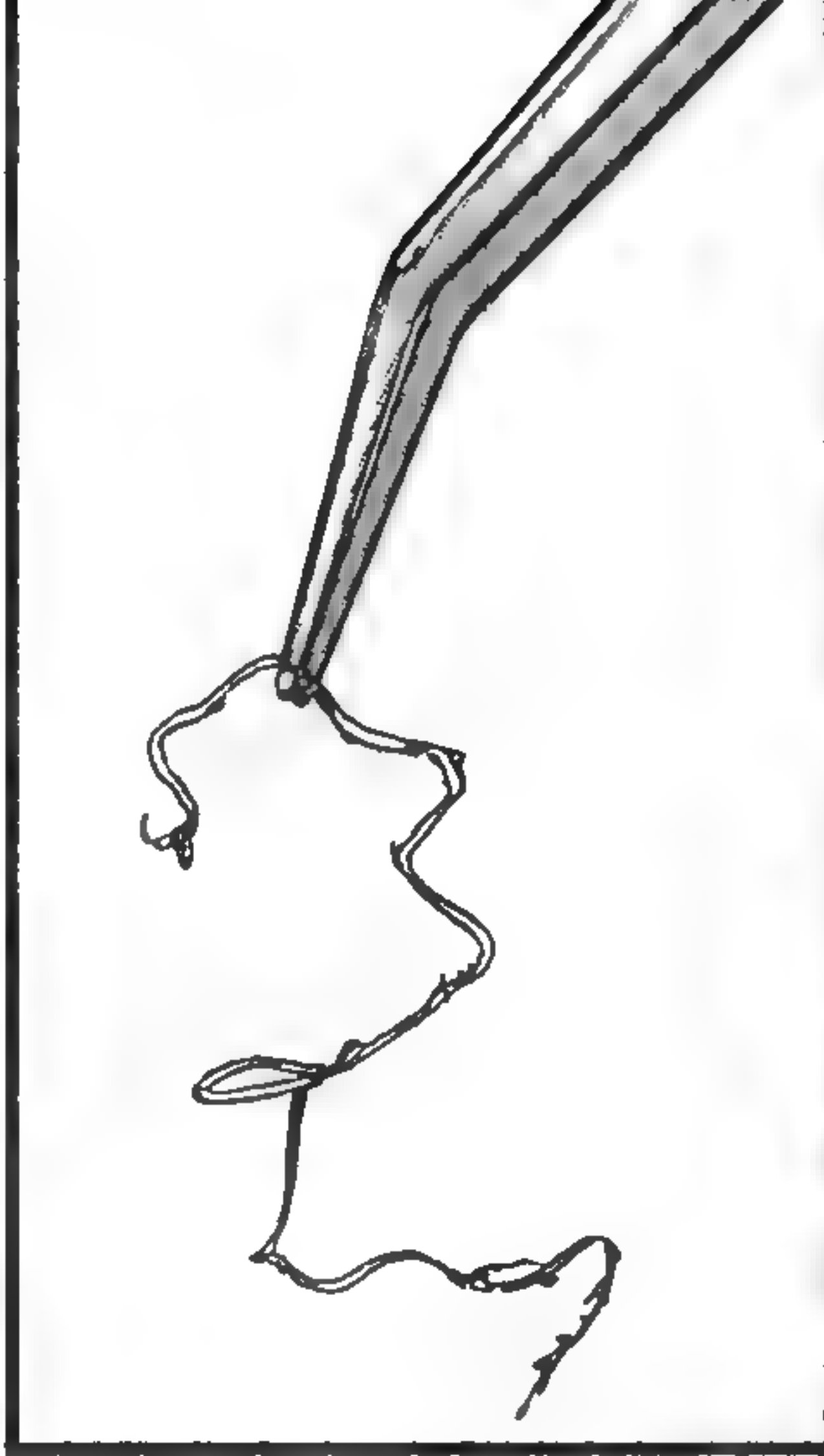


SHUT UP  
AND CUT  
ME OPEN  
ALREADY.



I WANT TO  
SEE MYSELF.  
WITH MY  
OWN TWO  
EYES!









IT HASN'T  
CLOSED OVER  
WITH NEW  
BONE...

BUT IT  
LOOKS LIKE IT  
HAS GOTTEN  
PLUGGED  
BY PUS AND  
SCABS.



THE HOLE  
IN YOUR  
SKULL...



SHP

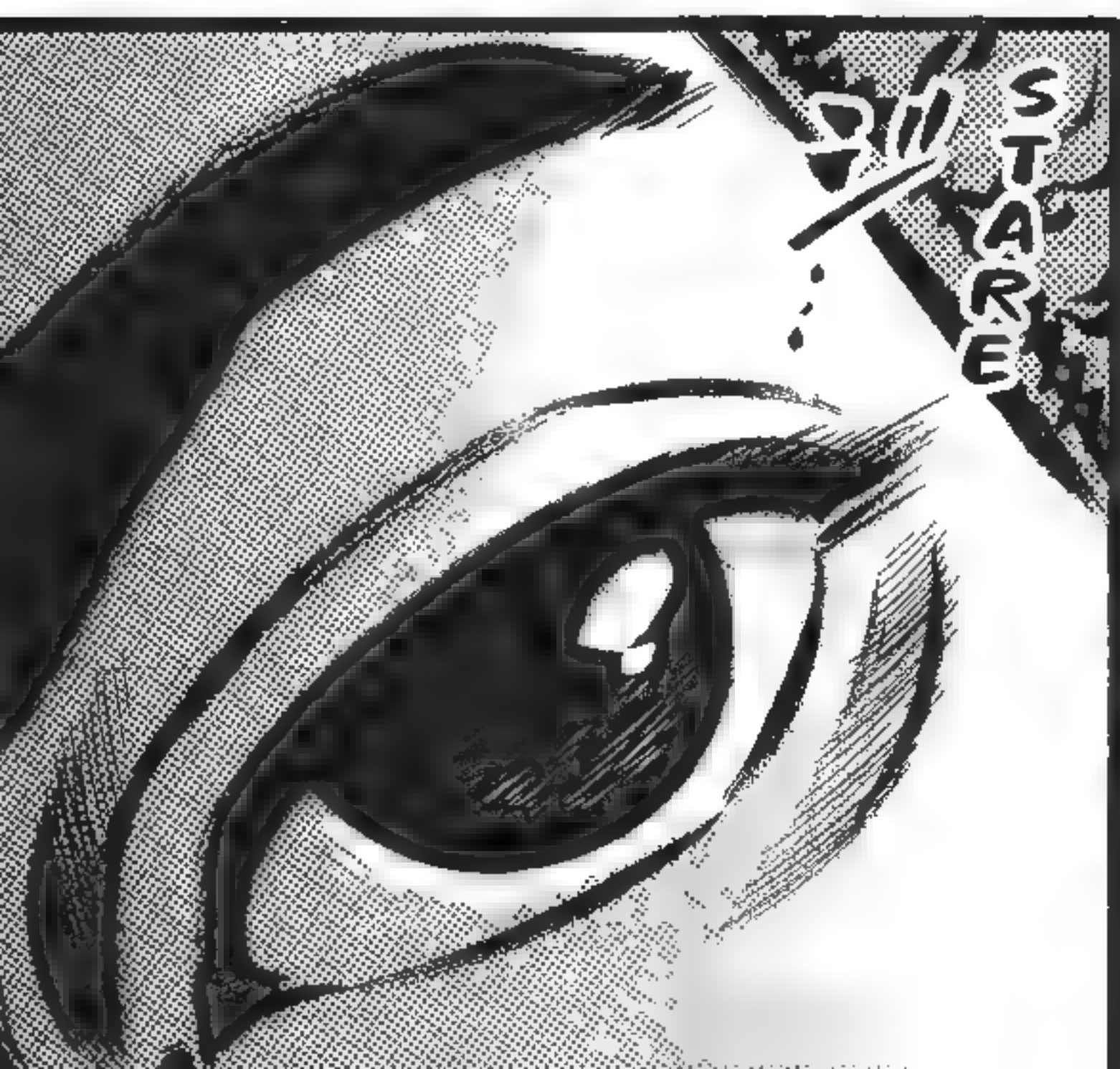
EASY  
AS PIE!

♪



HM. SO ALL  
WE HAVE TO  
DO IS CLEAR  
OUT THE  
PLUG...

AND THE  
HOLE WILL  
BE GOOD  
AS NEW.

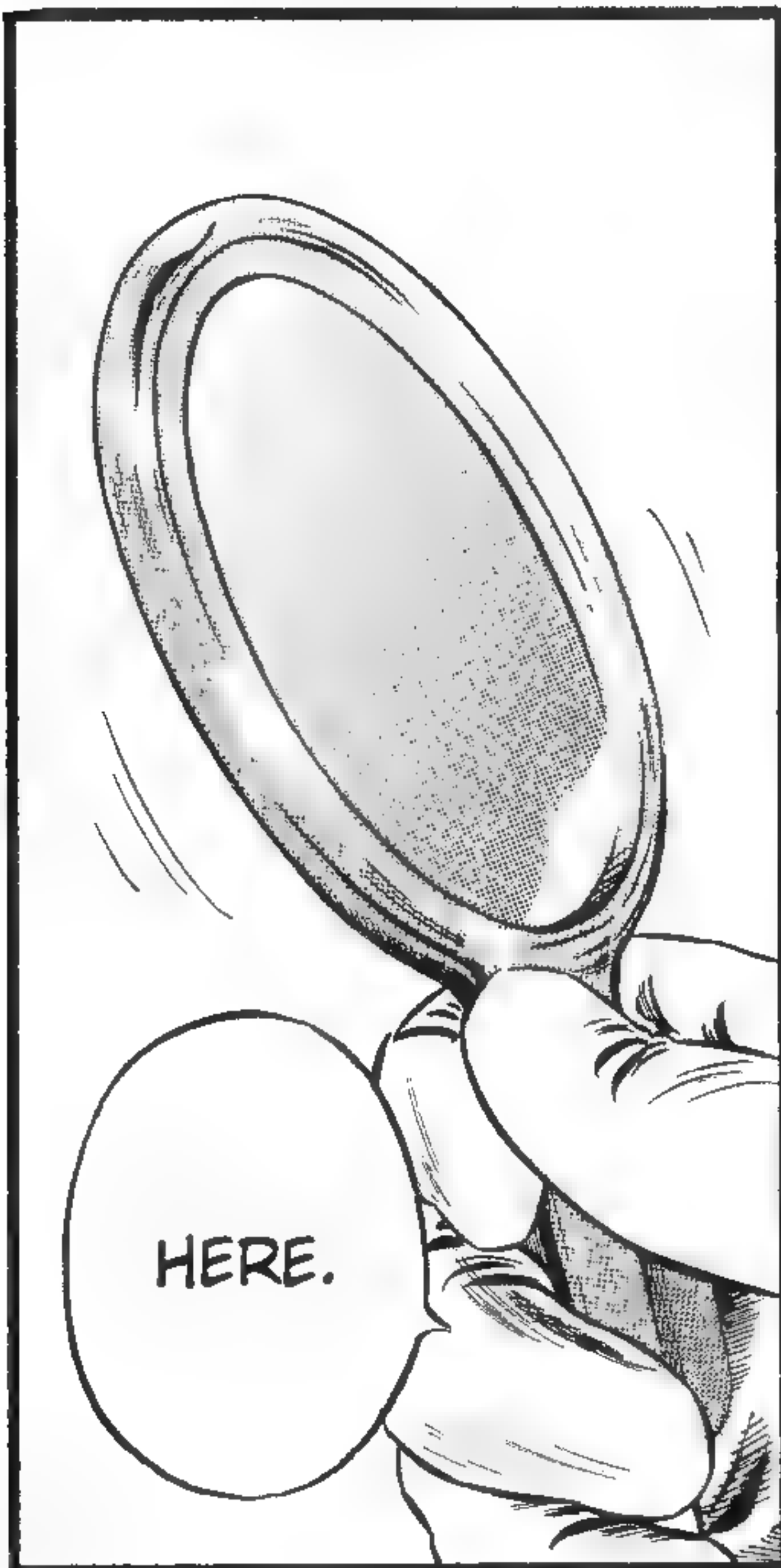


STARE

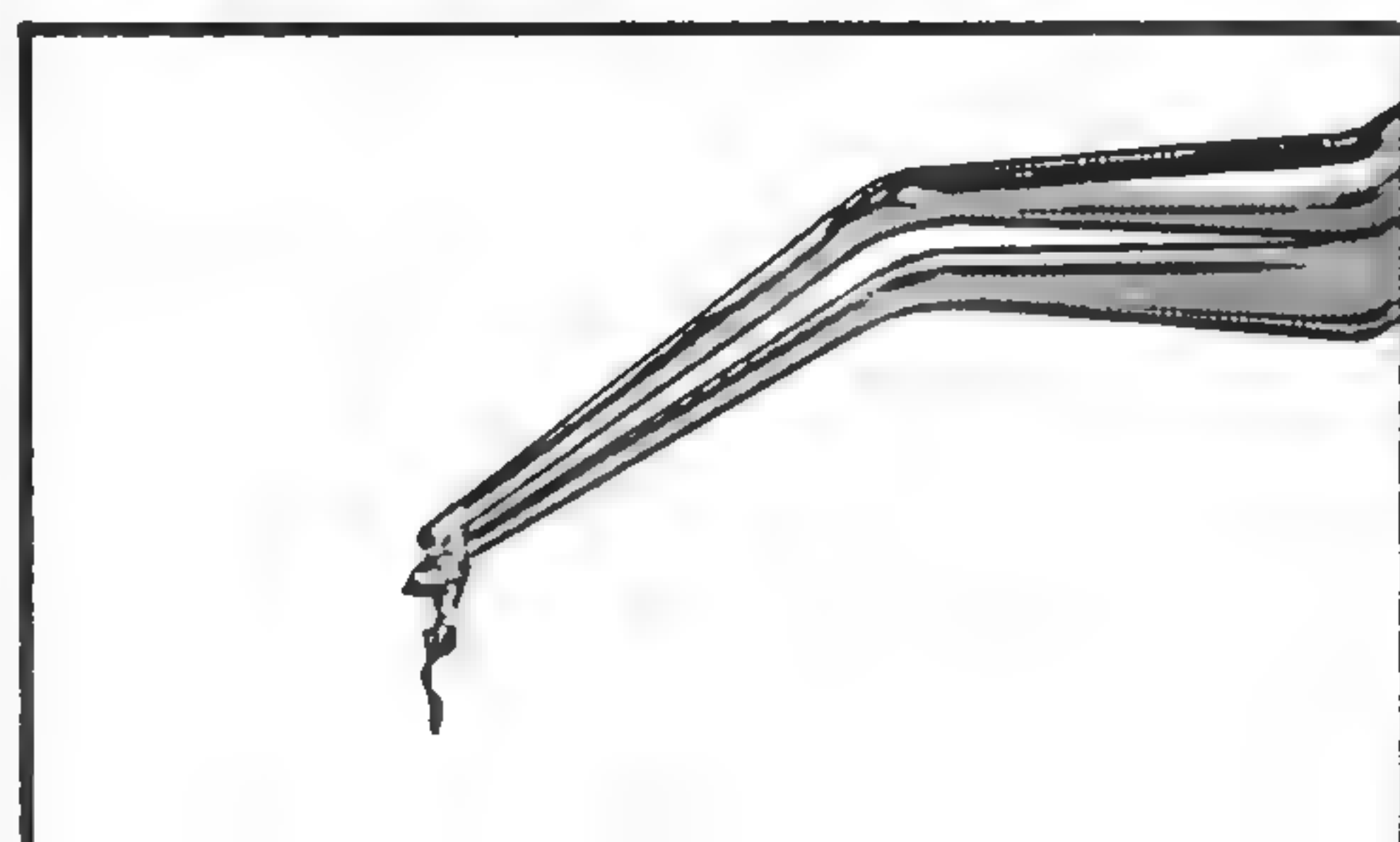
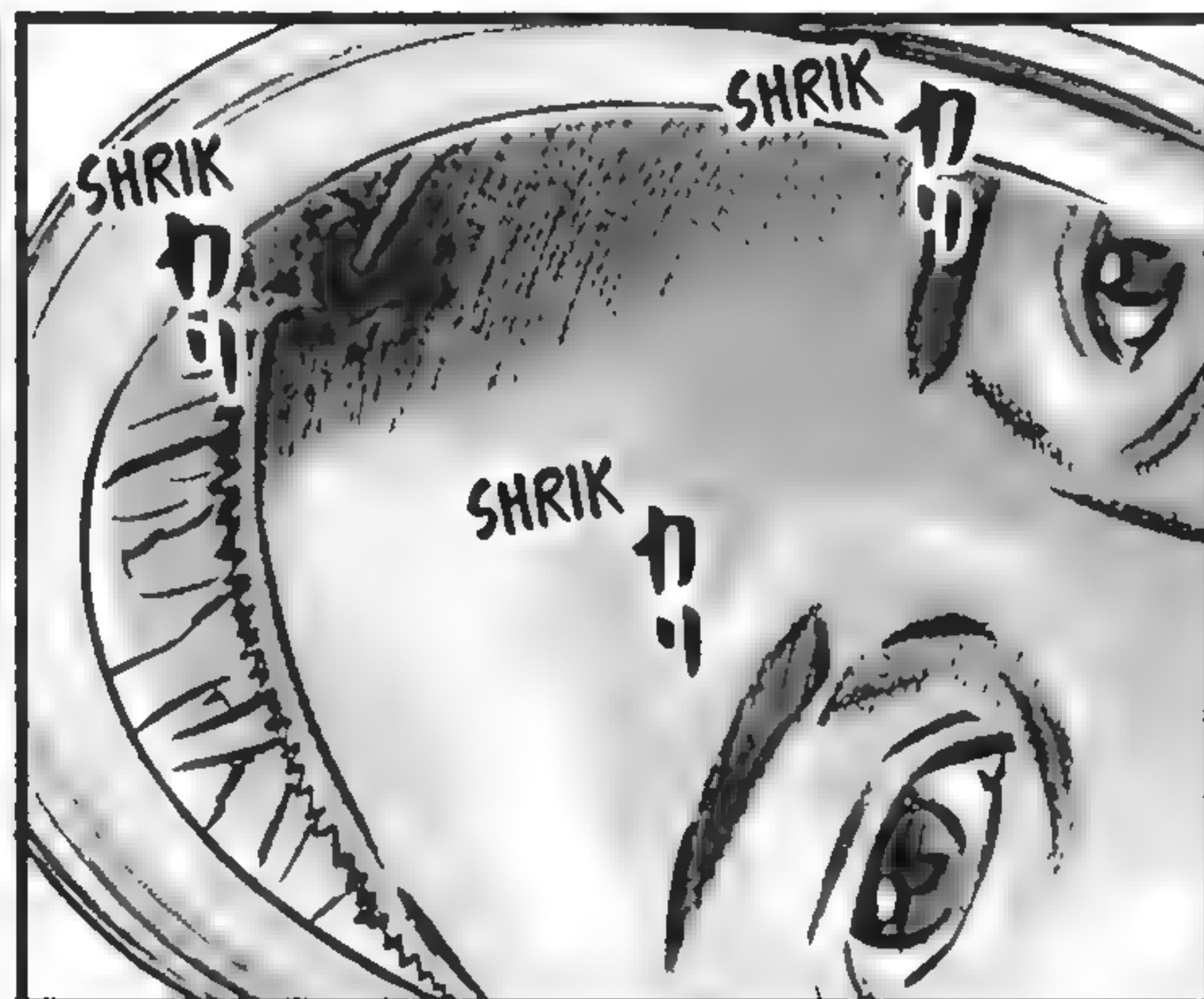
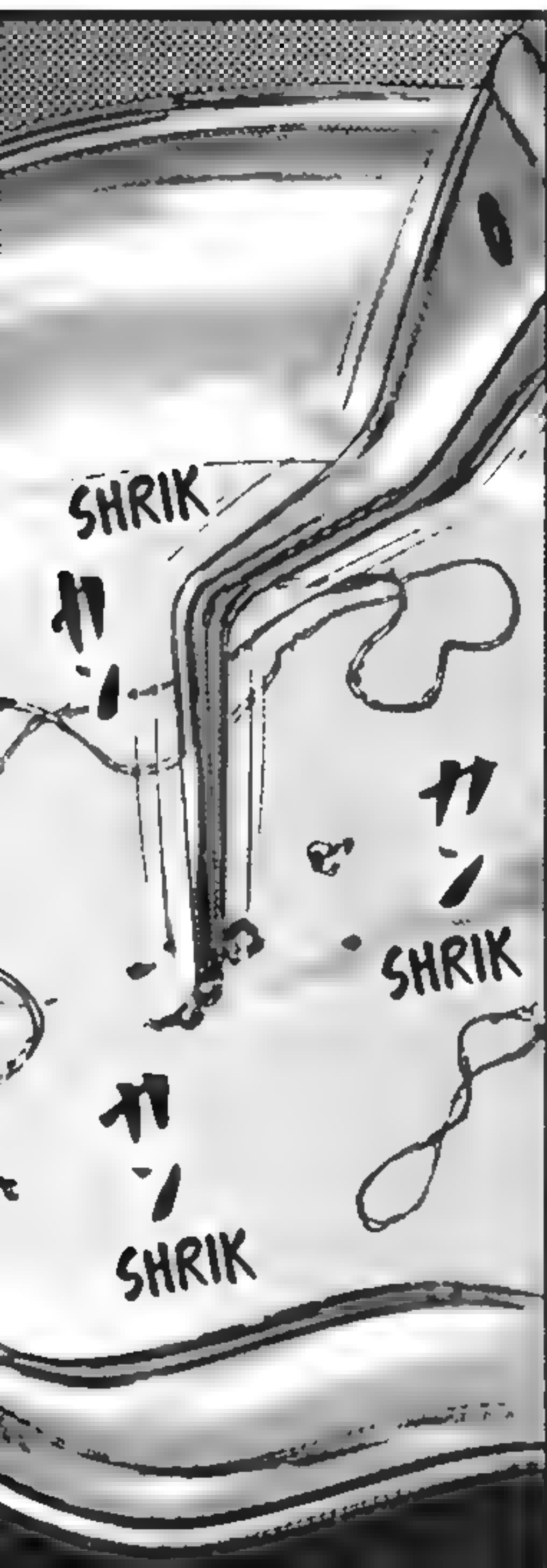
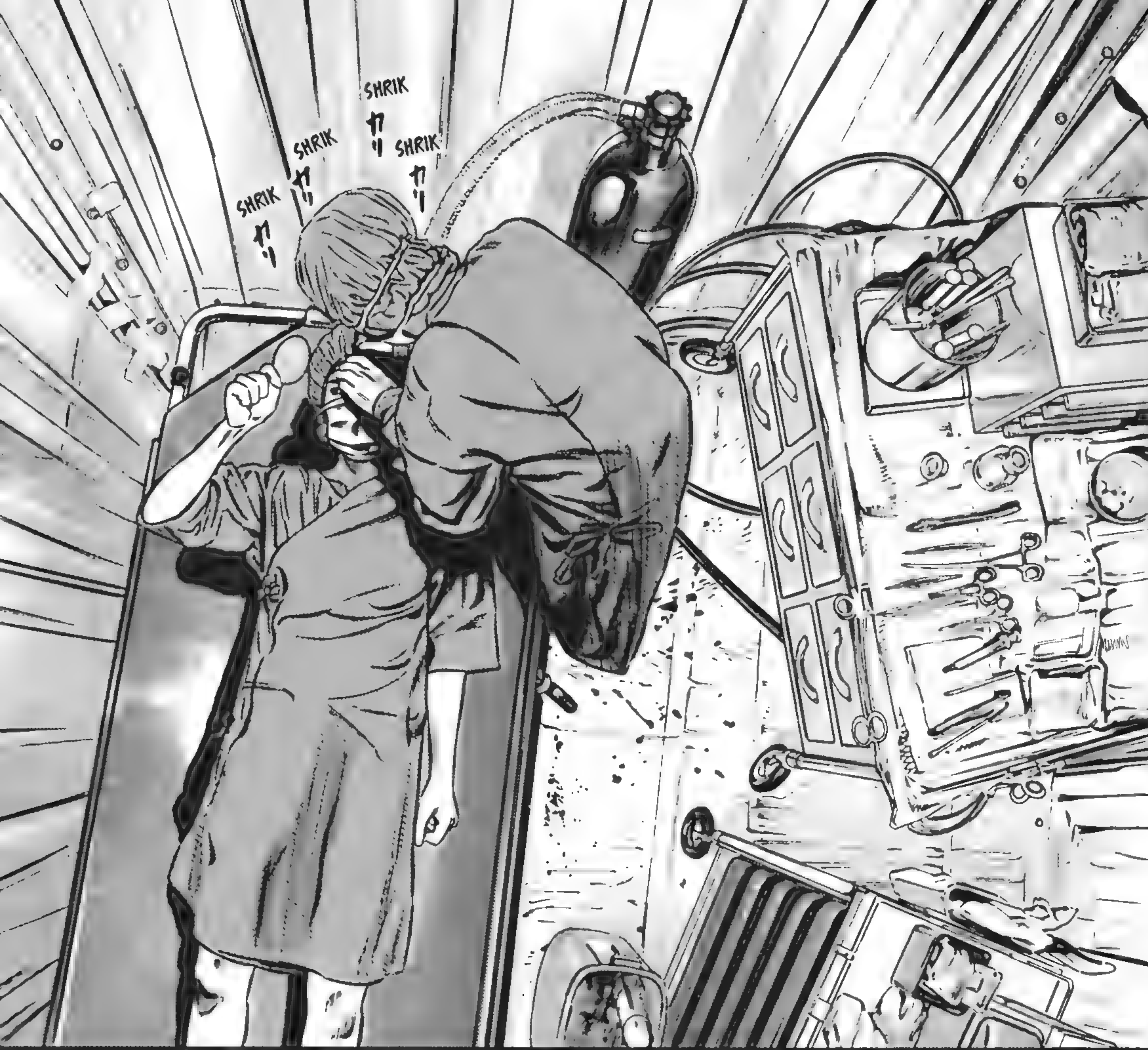


!

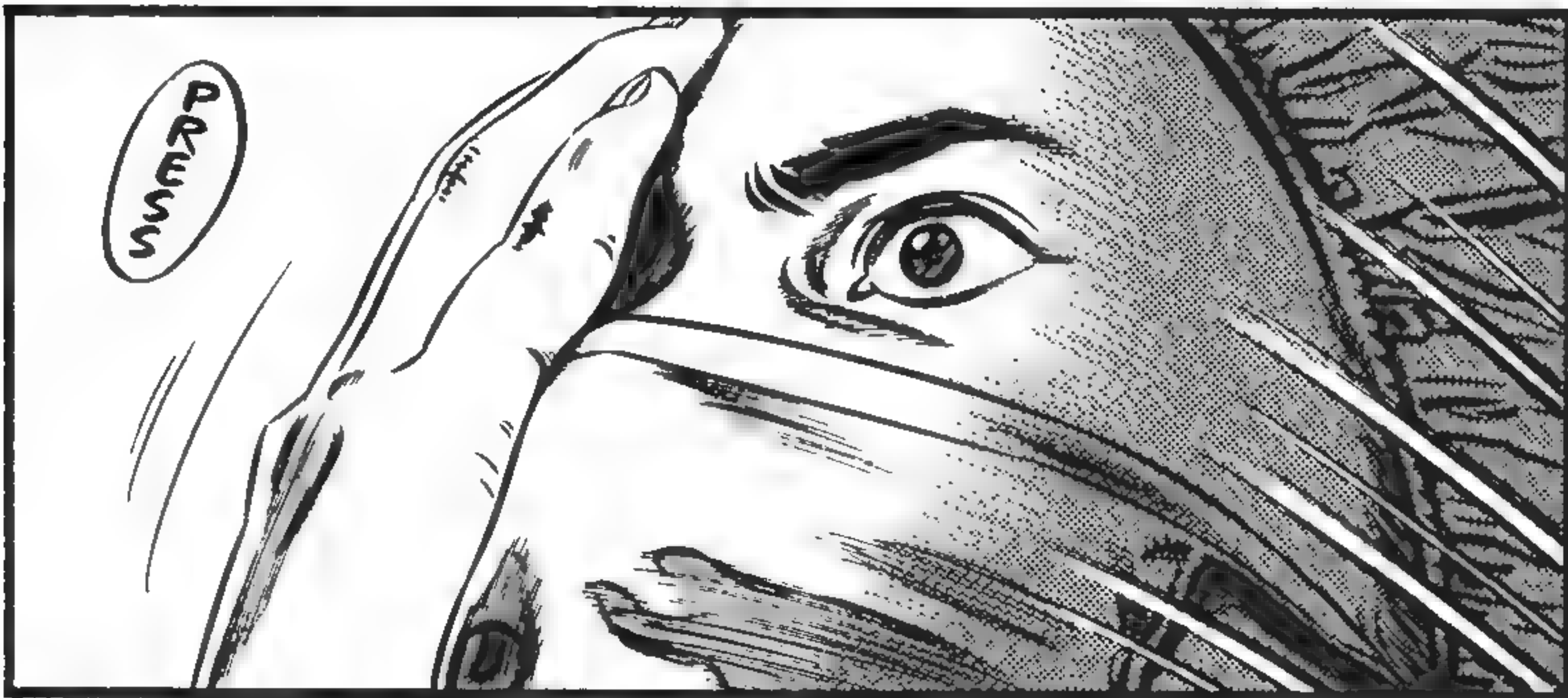
















NAKOSHI-SAN, CALM DOWN.



WHAT THE HELL, MAN?! I STILL CAN'T SEE CRAP!



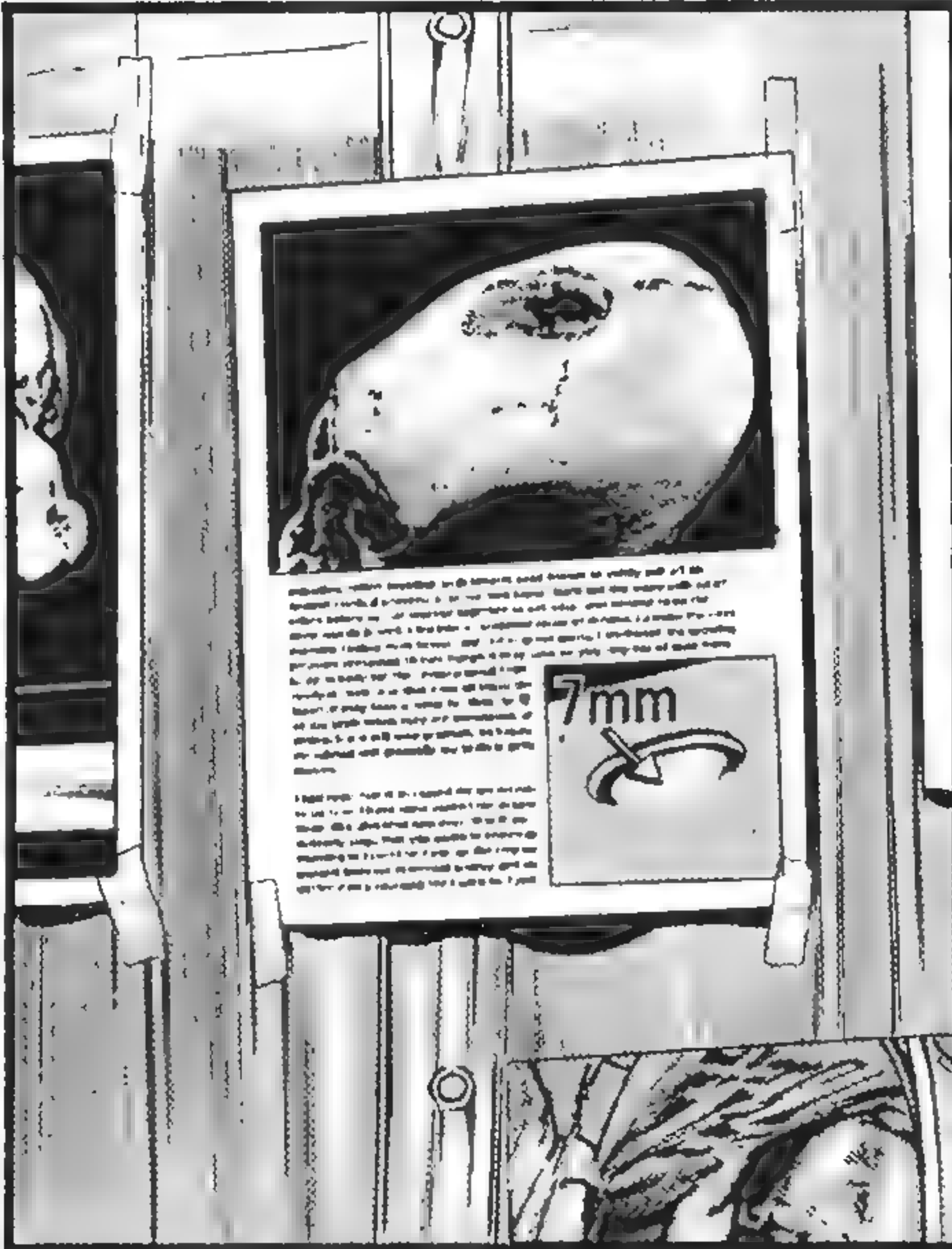
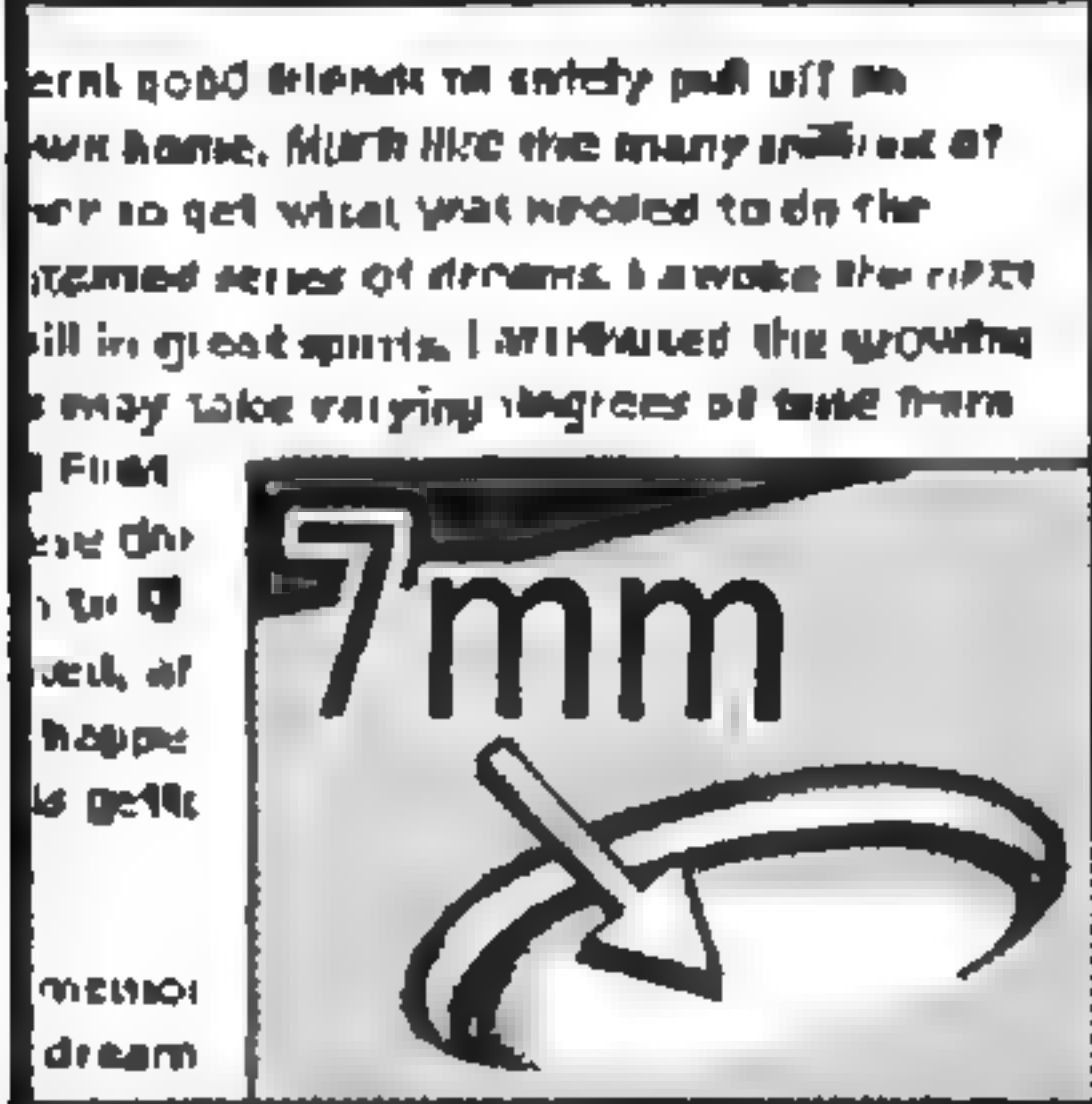
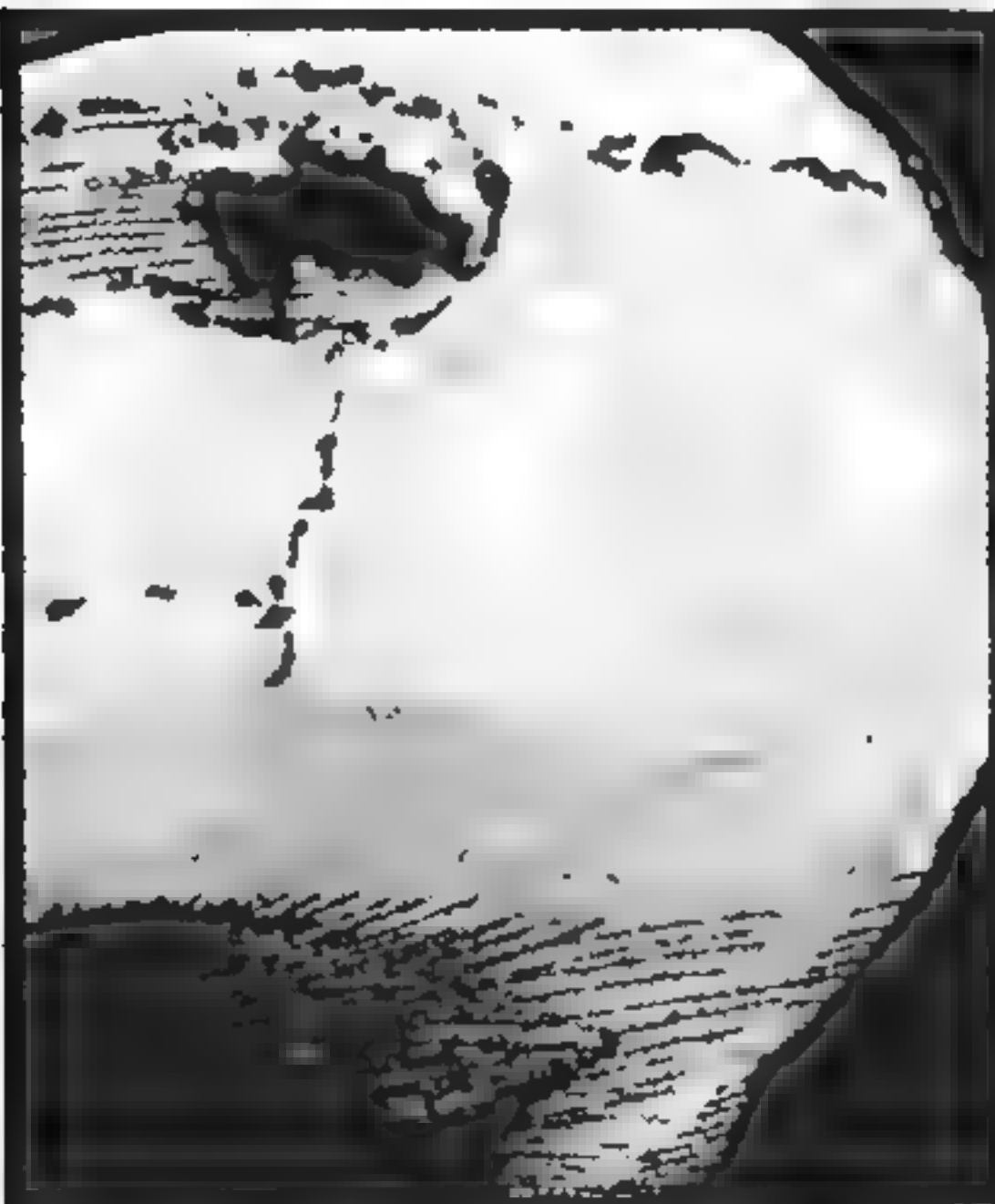
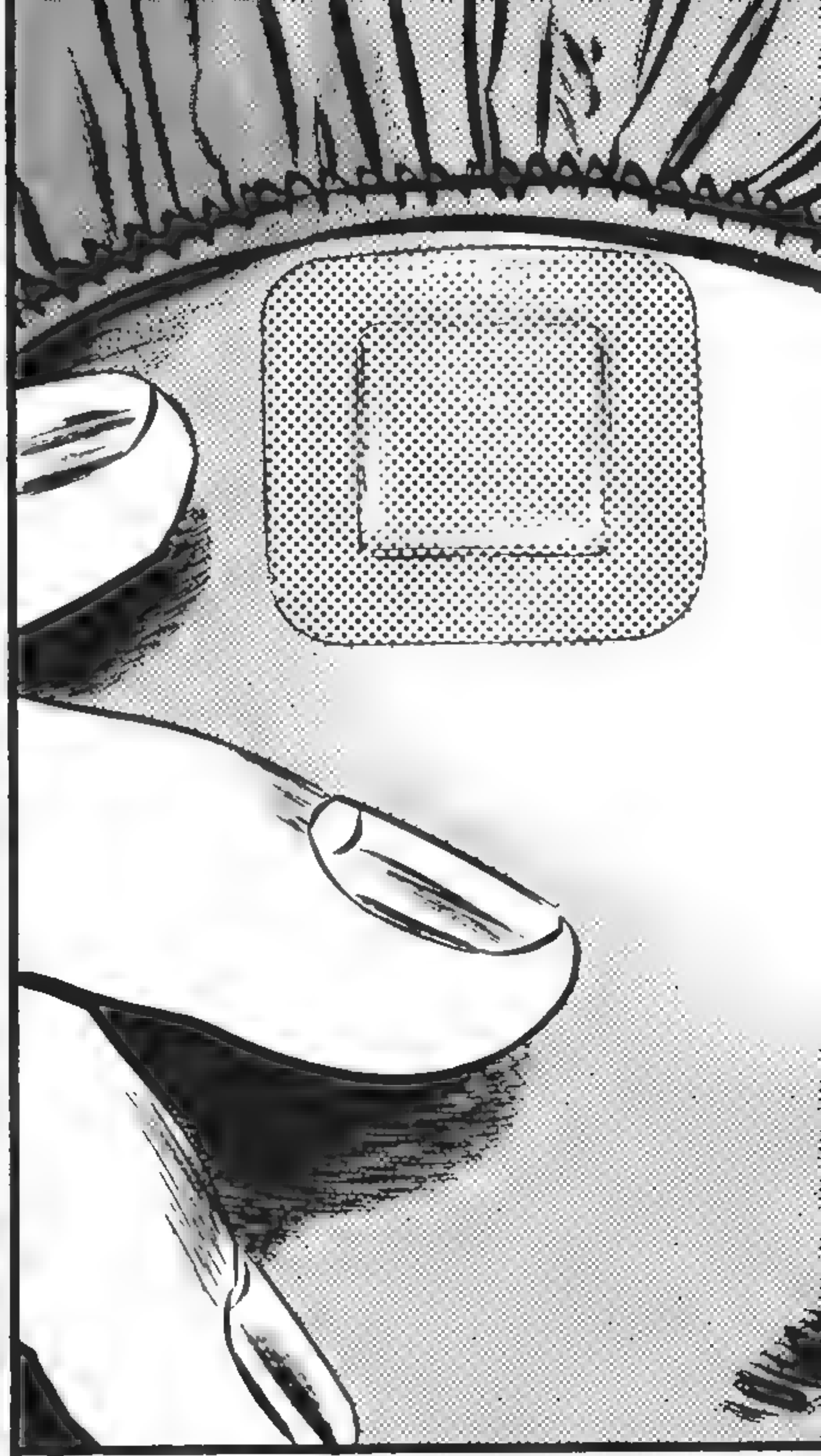
LET'S STITCH YOU BACK UP.



BACK WHEN WE FIRST OPENED THE HOLE, IT TOOK A WHILE TO SEE ANY EFFECTS, REMEMBER?

JUST BE A LITTLE PATIENT!









YES?

HEY!

KLATTA  
KLATTA



Y...

YUP.



YOU SAID  
YOU ONLY  
MADE IT *THREE*  
MILLIMETERS,  
RIGHT?

WHEN  
YOU FIRST  
DRILLED  
THIS  
THING...



!



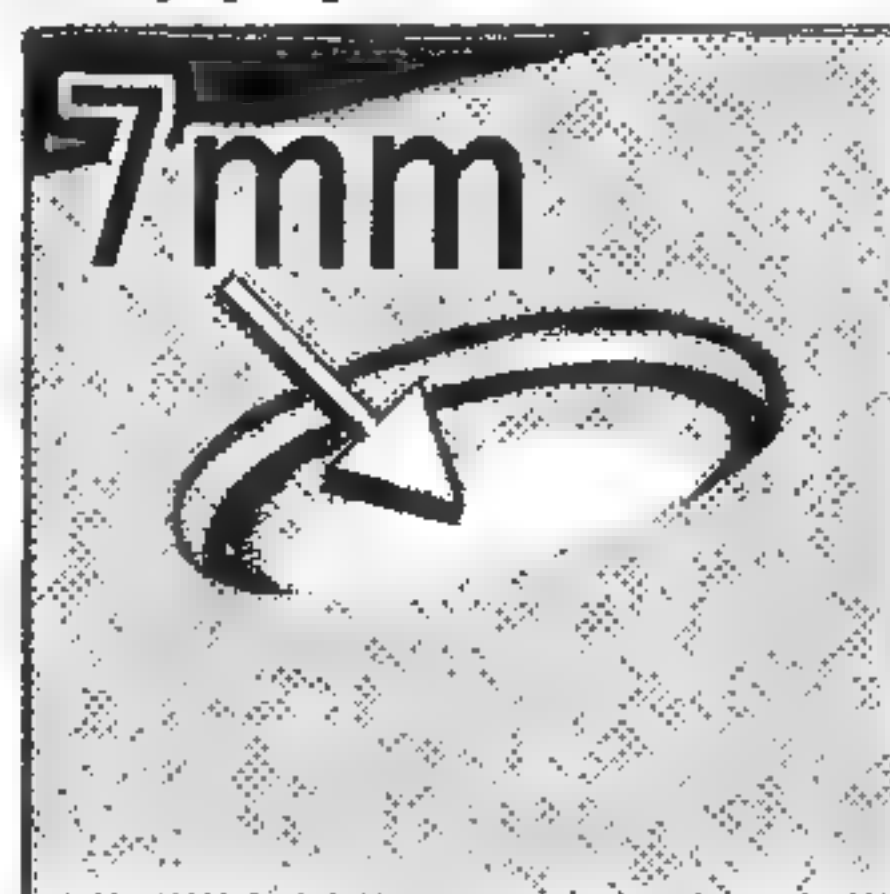
HAAH...

OKAY.  
SO?

BUT THAT  
POSTER SAYS  
TREPANATION DOESN'T  
WORK UNLESS THE  
HOLE'S AT LEAST  
SEVEN MILLIMETERS  
ACROSS.

...pulling off an ancient medical procedure, in my mind. Much like the many brilliant of things before us, we worked together to get what was needed to do the thing and do it well. It felt like a long series of dreams. I awoke the next morning feeling even better, and still in great spirits. I attributed the growing pleasure sensations to two things it may take varying degrees of time from body to body for the Cerebro-spinal Fluid, re-adjust itself, and then once all these are done, it may take a while for them to be of the brain when they are stimulated, at sitting, but it still may gradually be happy stimulated and gradually my brain is getting motion.

I had read that it increased dream memory to be true. I have remembered my dream since. We also read however, that if you suddenly stop, that you begin to remember something so I could be clear on the trepanation general increase in mental energy and also coffee every morning like I used to. I just











BECAUSE  
THE SIXTH  
SENSE CAN  
TAKE ALL  
KINDS OF  
FORMS,  
RIGHT?

I KNOW  
THAT!



TAKE A  
CLOSER  
LOOK  
AT THAT  
POSTER.

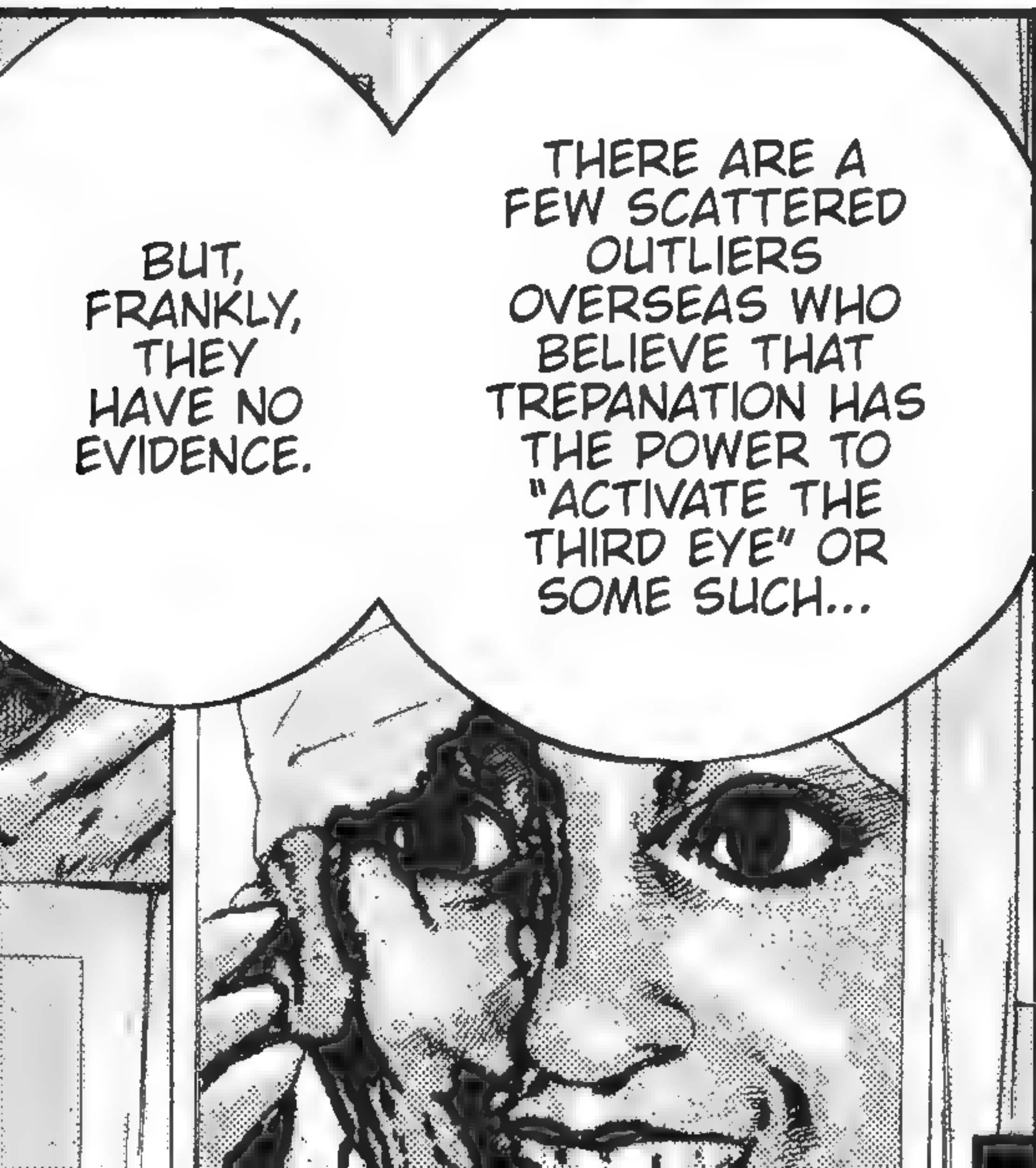
NOTICE IT SAYS  
ABSOLUTELY  
NOTHING ABOUT  
TREPANATION  
GRANTING ONE THE  
ABILITY TO SEE  
HOMUNCULI.



!

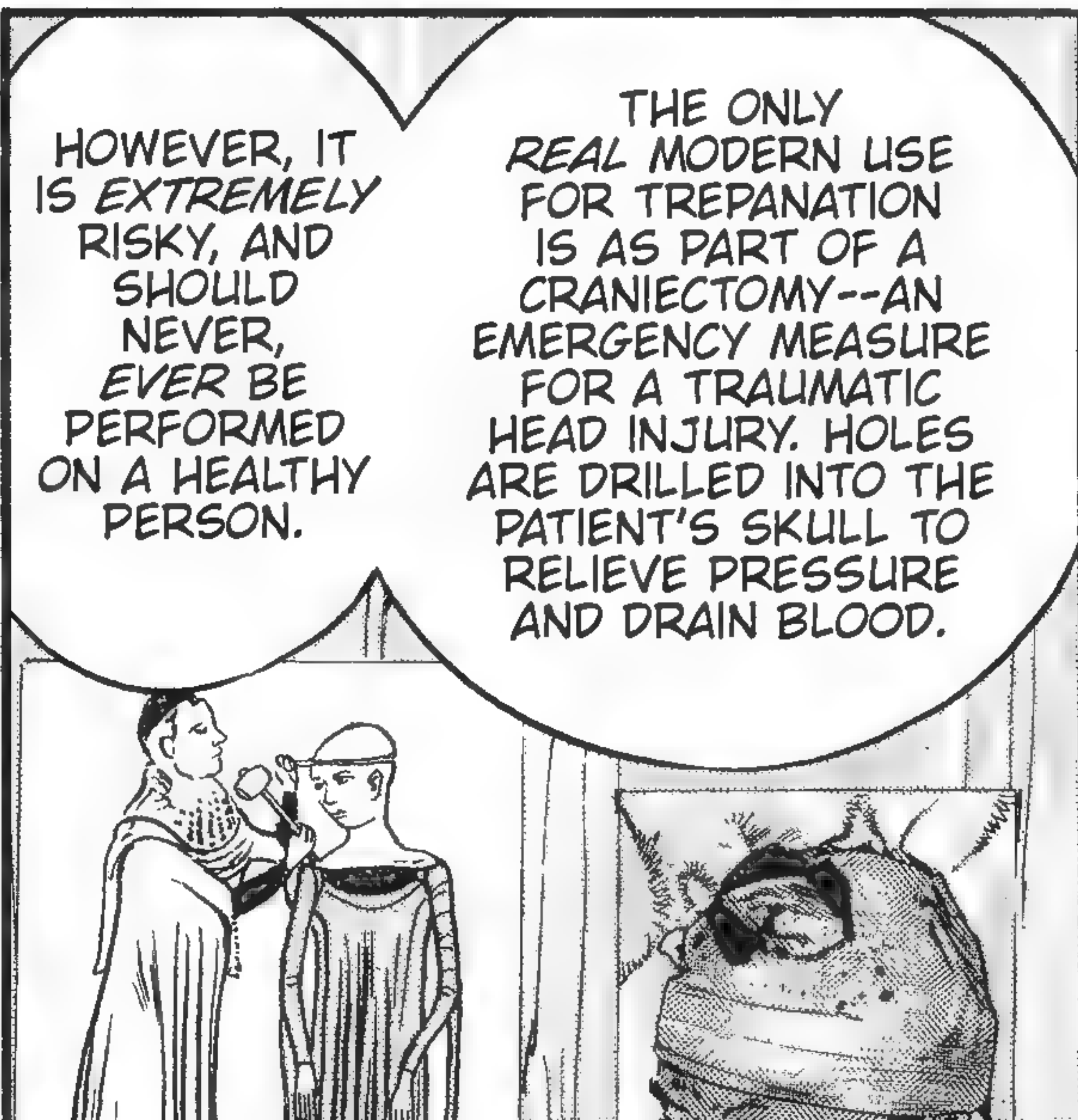
I WAS  
LYING  
ABOUT  
ALL  
THAT.

WRONG.



BUT,  
FRANKLY,  
THEY  
HAVE NO  
EVIDENCE.

THERE ARE A  
FEW SCATTERED  
OUTLIERS  
OVERSEAS WHO  
BELIEVE THAT  
TREPANATION HAS  
THE POWER TO  
"ACTIVATE THE  
THIRD EYE" OR  
SOME SUCH...

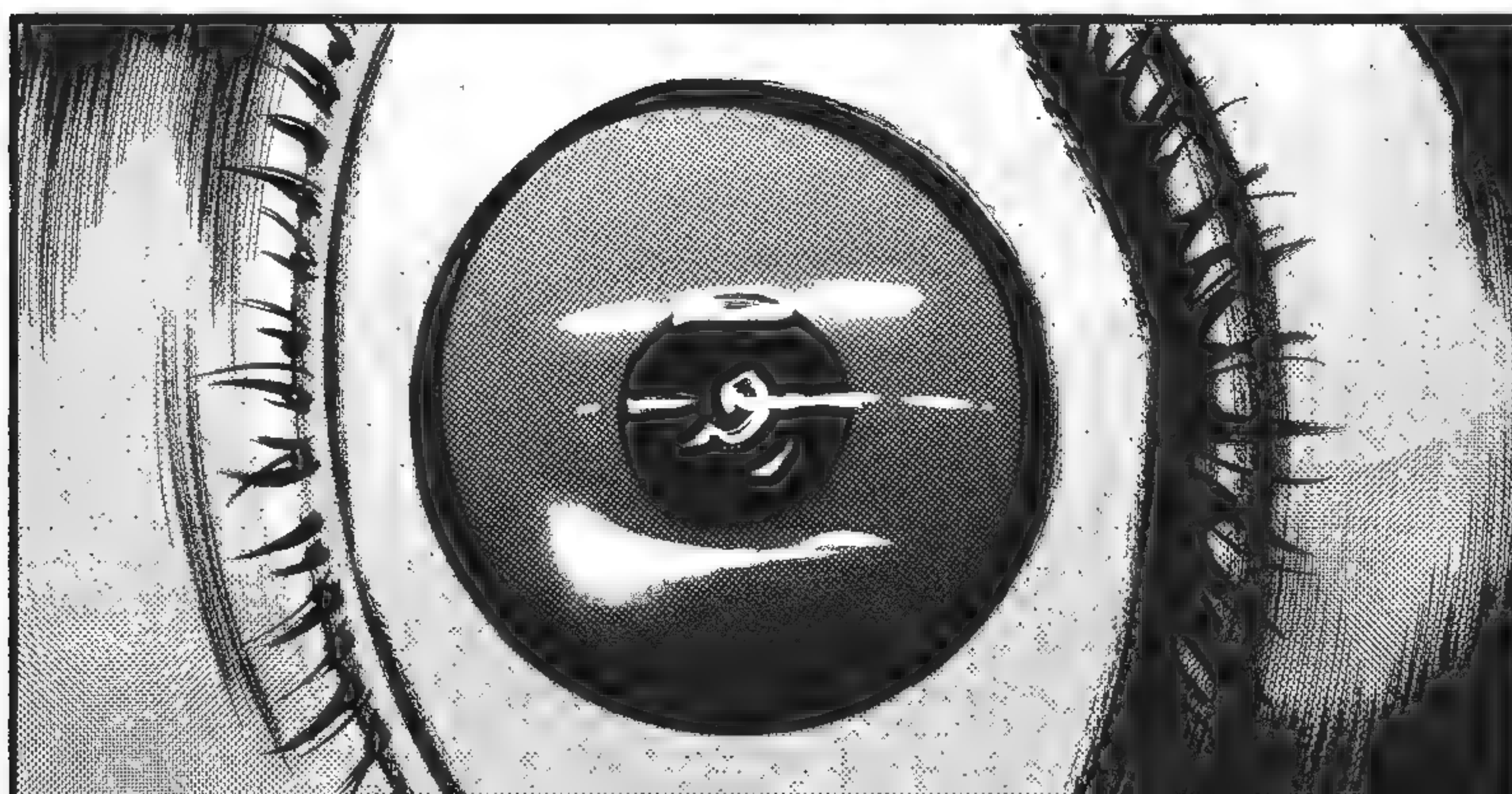
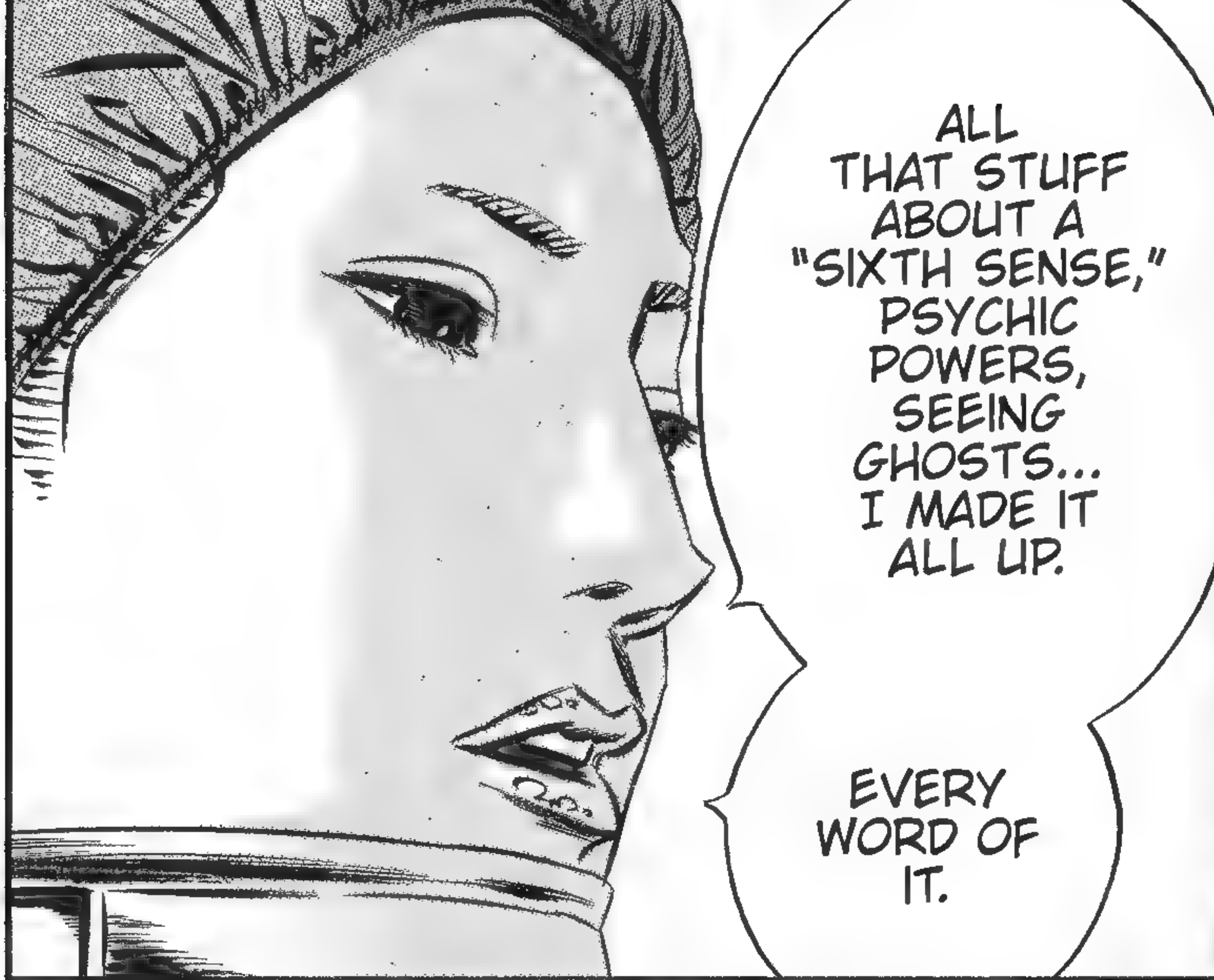


HOWEVER, IT  
IS EXTREMELY  
RISKY, AND  
SHOULD  
NEVER,  
EVER BE  
PERFORMED  
ON A HEALTHY  
PERSON.

THE ONLY  
REAL MODERN USE  
FOR TREPANATION  
IS AS PART OF A  
CRANIECTOMY--AN  
EMERGENCY MEASURE  
FOR A TRAUMATIC  
HEAD INJURY. HOLES  
ARE DRILLED INTO THE  
PATIENT'S SKULL TO  
RELIEVE PRESSURE  
AND DRAIN BLOOD.











?



YOU'RE SO  
FULL OF  
SHIT.

うん  
うん



YOU'VE  
SEEN IT  
FIRSTHAND.  
YOU KNOW  
BETTER THAN  
ANYONE...

THAT THERE'S  
SOMETHING  
MORE TO THIS.  
SOMETHING  
YOUR TEXT-  
BOOKS CAN'T  
EXPLAIN.



...







# Hideo Yamamoto

---

Born in 1968, in Saitama Prefecture.

Hideo Yamamoto is his real name.

Assistant experience: Kenshi Hirokane-sensei,  
Ikuko Kujirai-sensei.

Works: *SHEEP*, *Okama Hakusho*, *Voyeur*, *Ichi the Killer*, *Homunculus*, *HIKARI-MAN*.





Homunculus







# Volume 8













Urp!  
Oof  
...

DAMN, CAR  
GUY! YER  
DRINKIN' LIKE  
A CHAMP  
TONIGHT.



ONCE YOUR  
BLOOD'S  
RACING...  
YOU CAN SEE  
MONSTERS.

AND  
THAT'S  
WHAT  
DOES IT.

MONSTERS  
?!

HOL'  
UP!



BOOZE GETS  
YOUR HEART  
POUNDING,  
YOU KNOW?

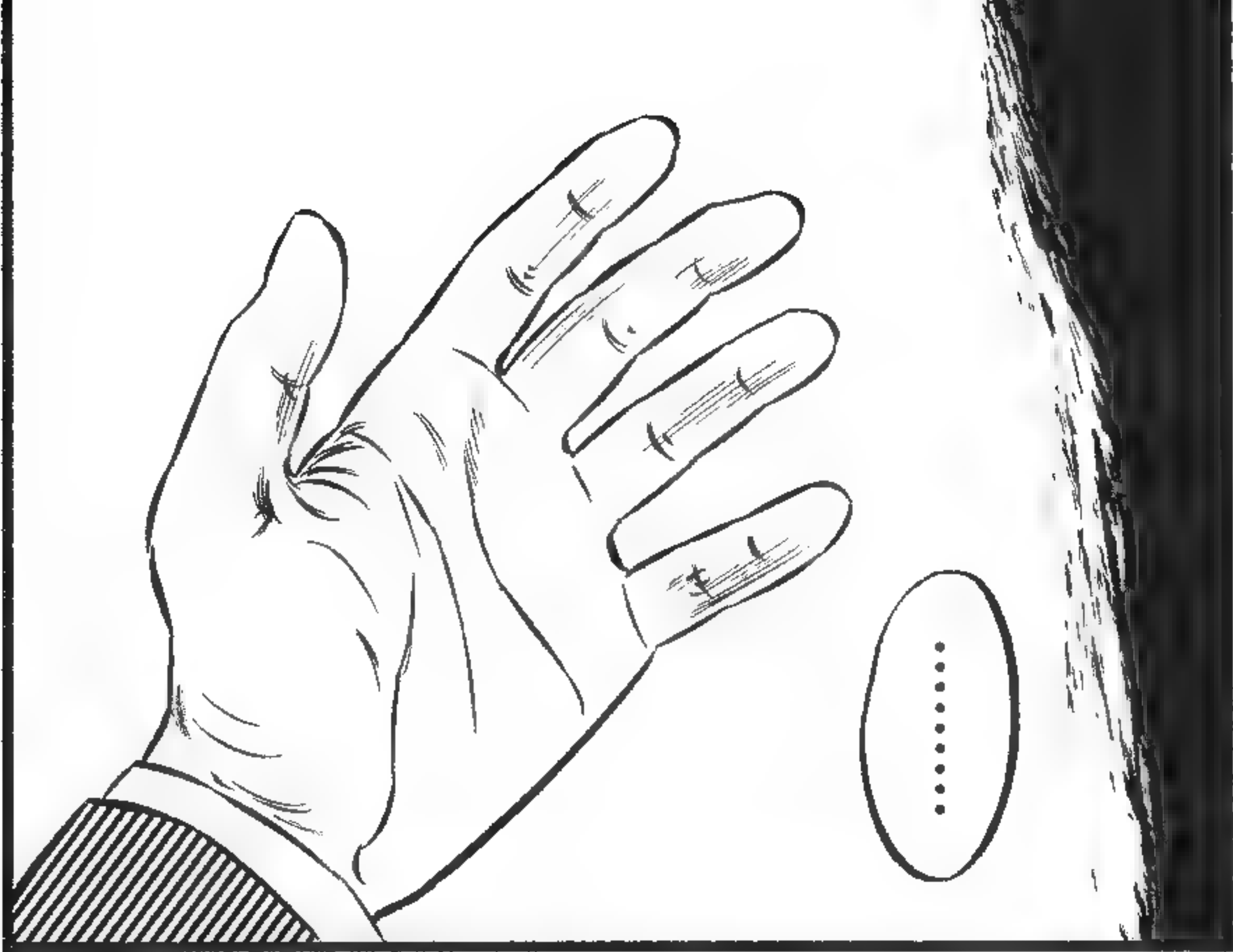
GOOD  
FOR  
BLOOD  
FLOW.



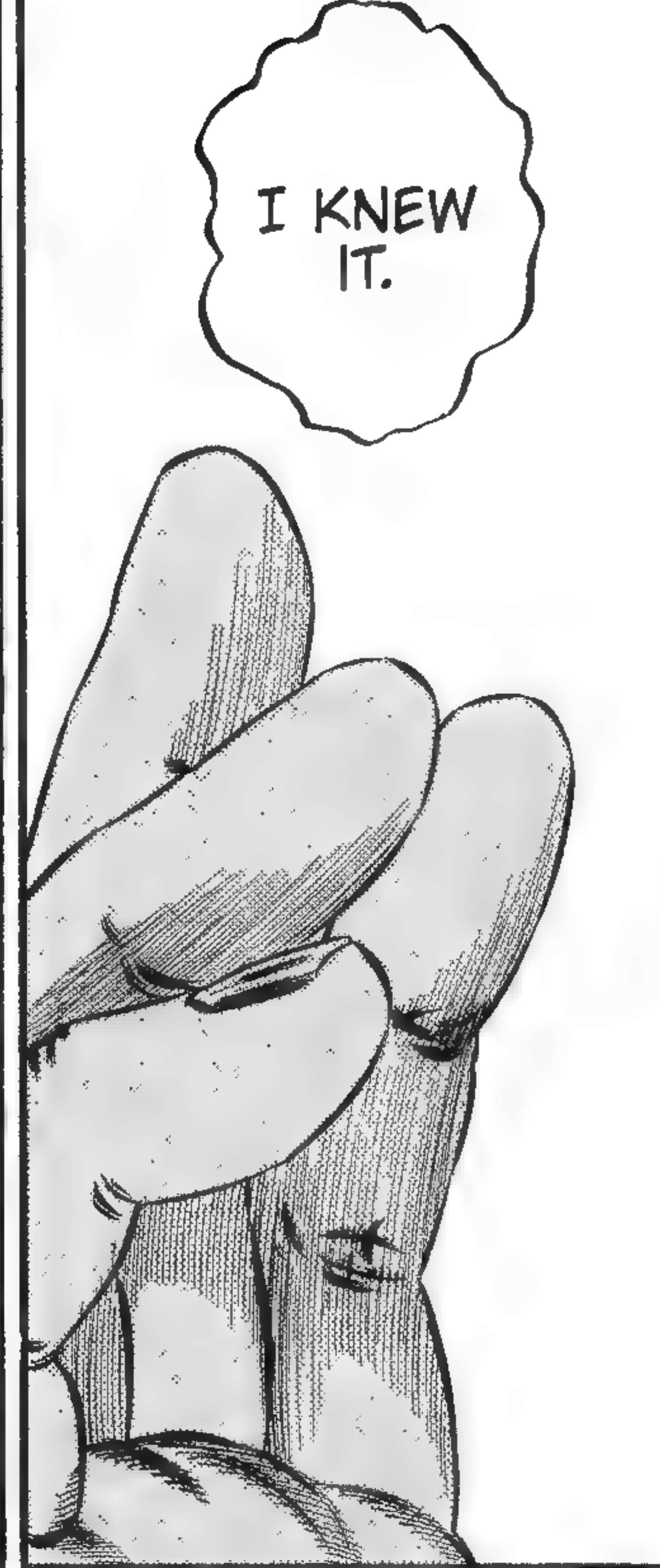
HOO BOY,  
YOU'RE  
DRUNKER  
THAN A  
SKUNK,  
KID!

EH  
HEH  
HEH  
HEH  
HEH!









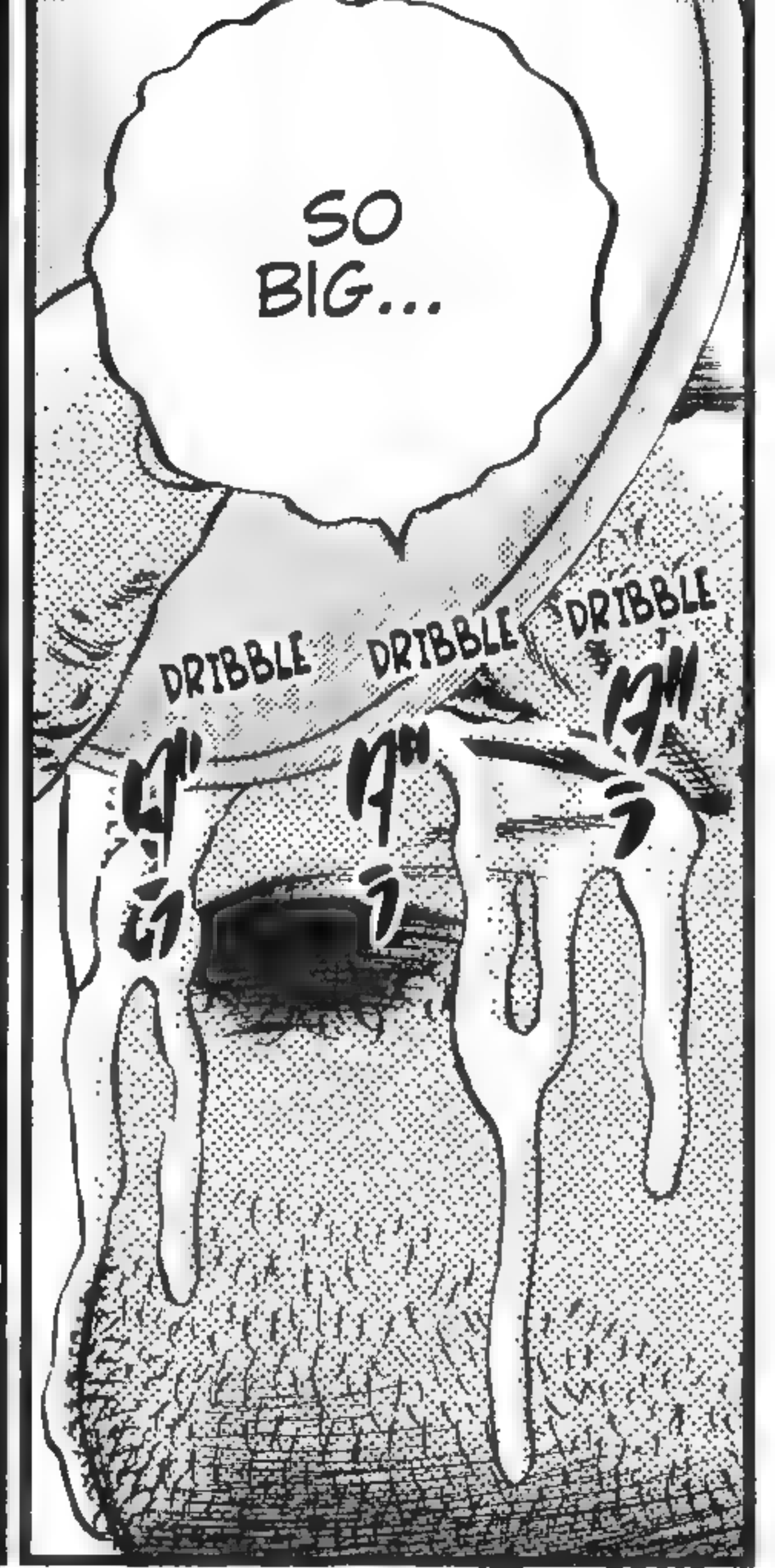
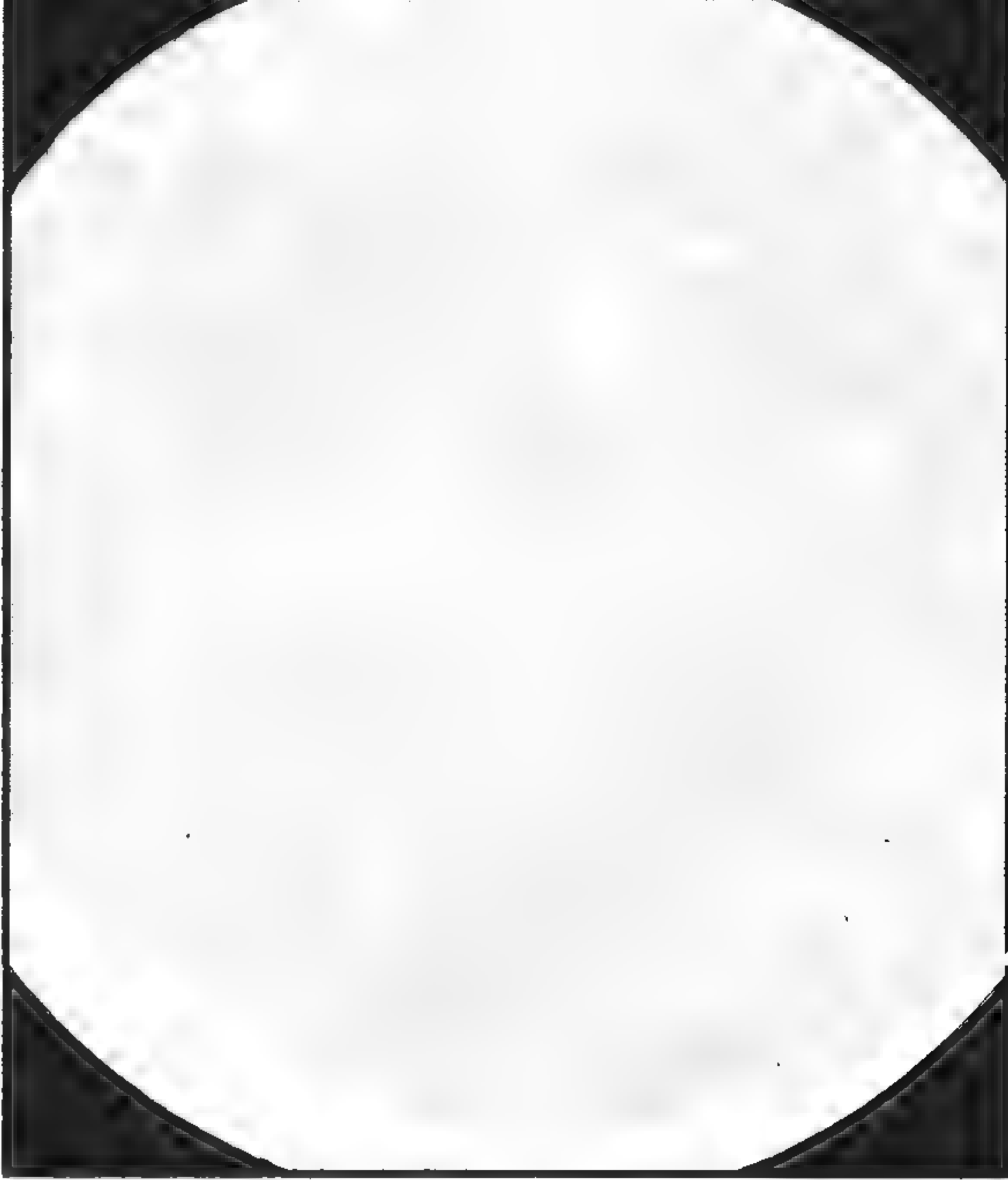








IF I HAD A  
HOLE THAT  
BIG...



SO  
BIG...

DRIBBLE DRIBBLE DRIBBLE



I BET I'D  
SEE SOME  
CRAAAZY  
SHIT...

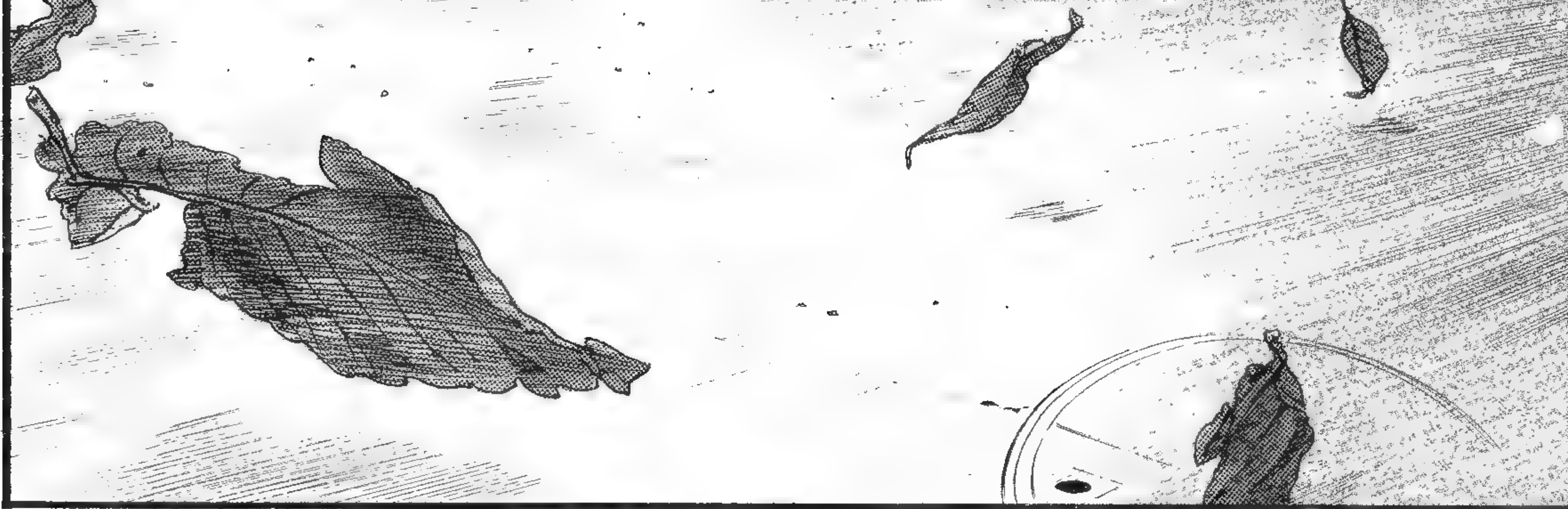








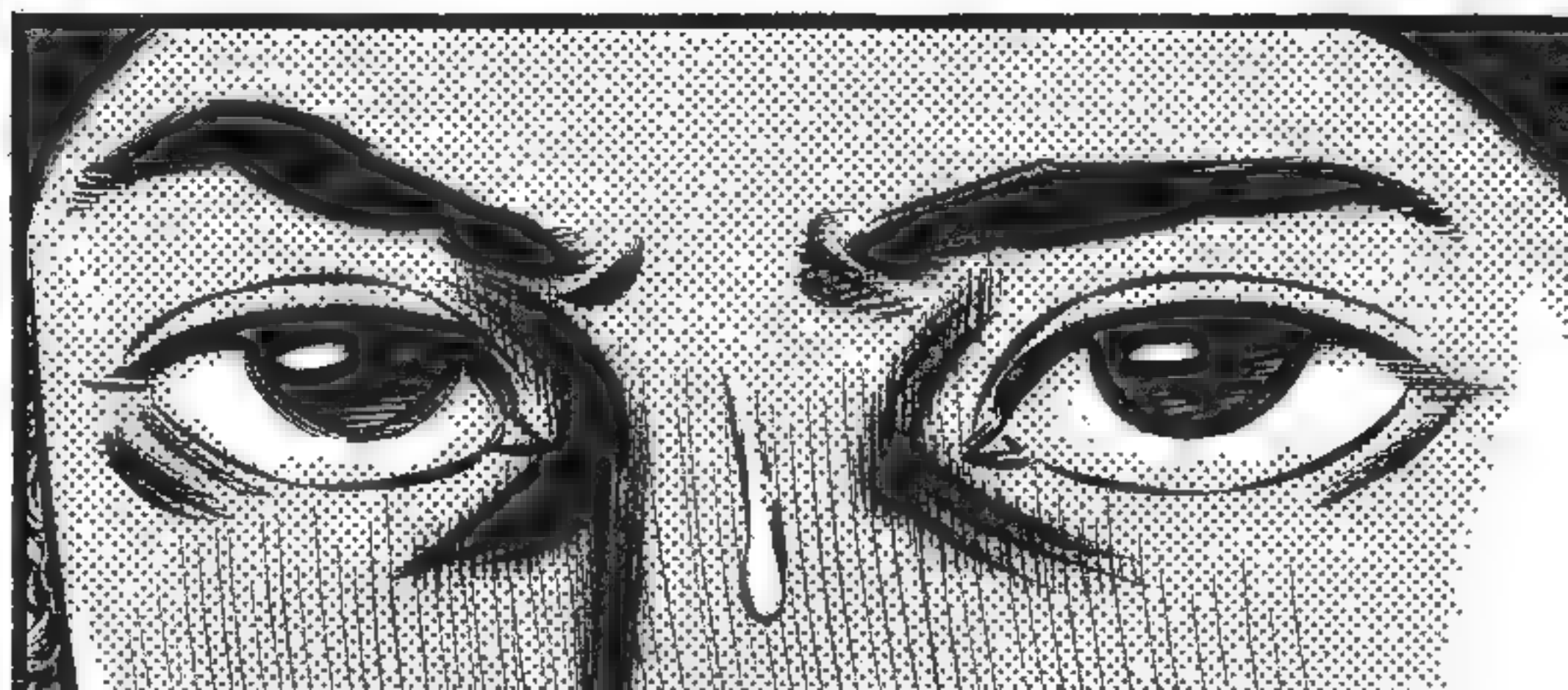
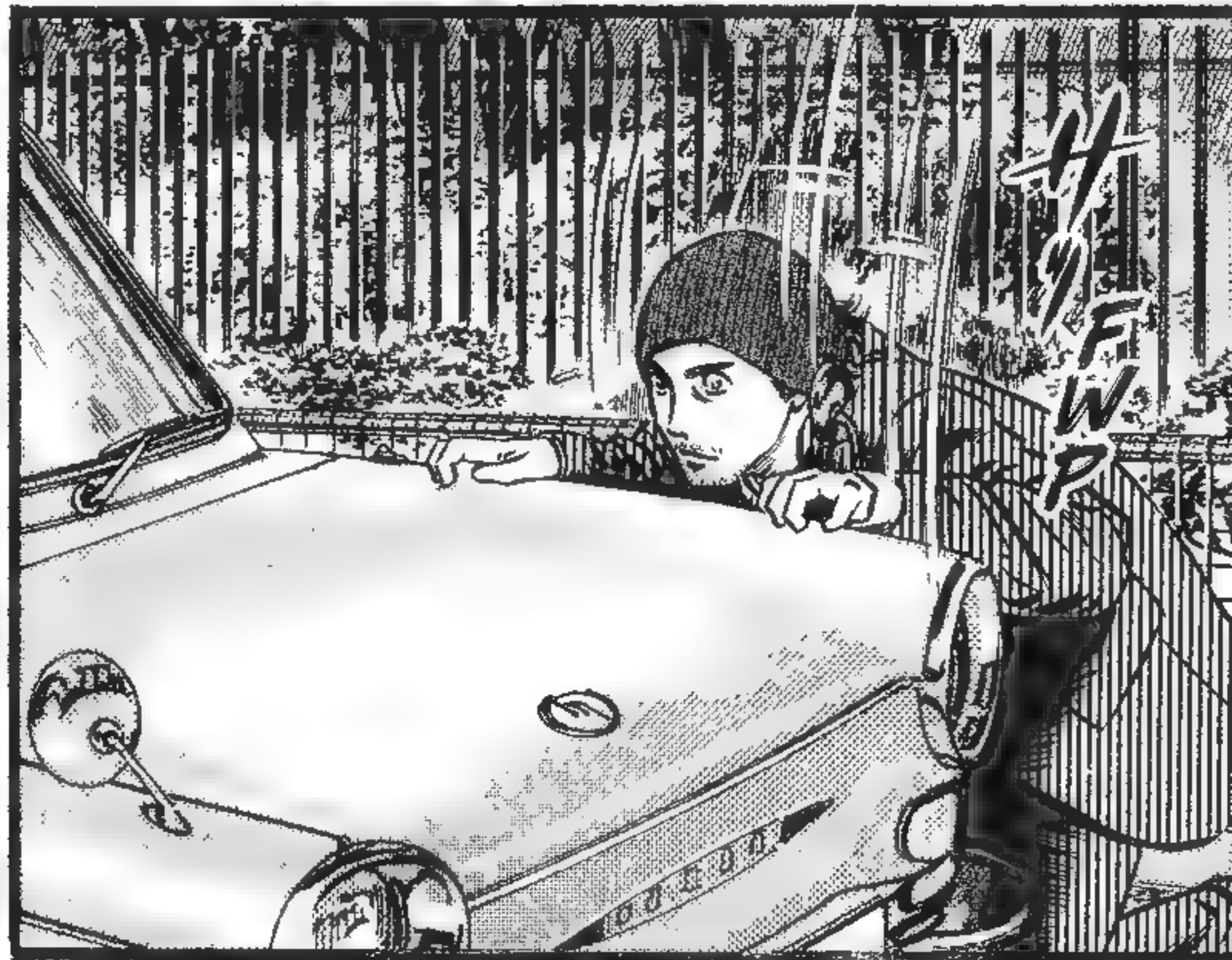
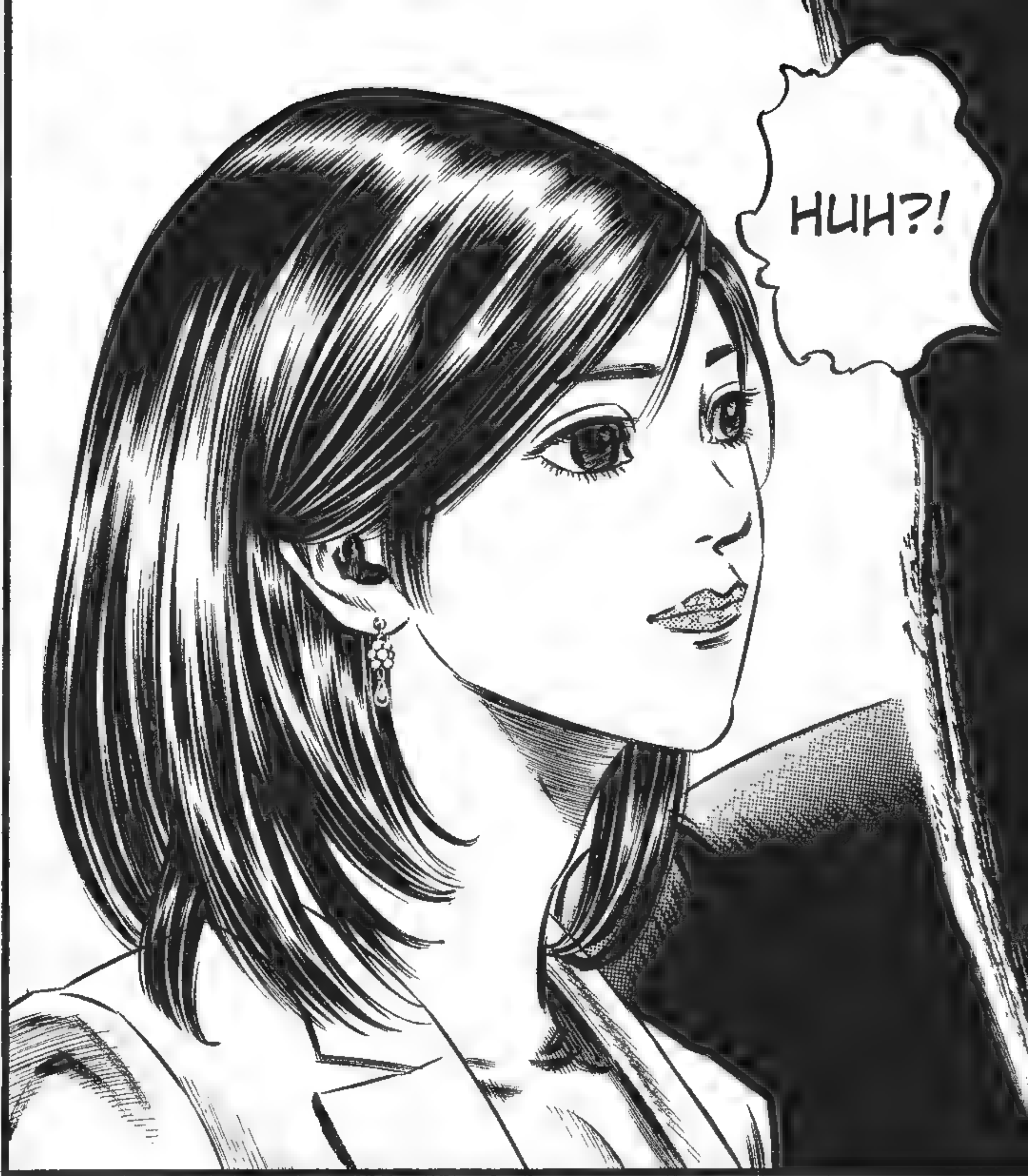




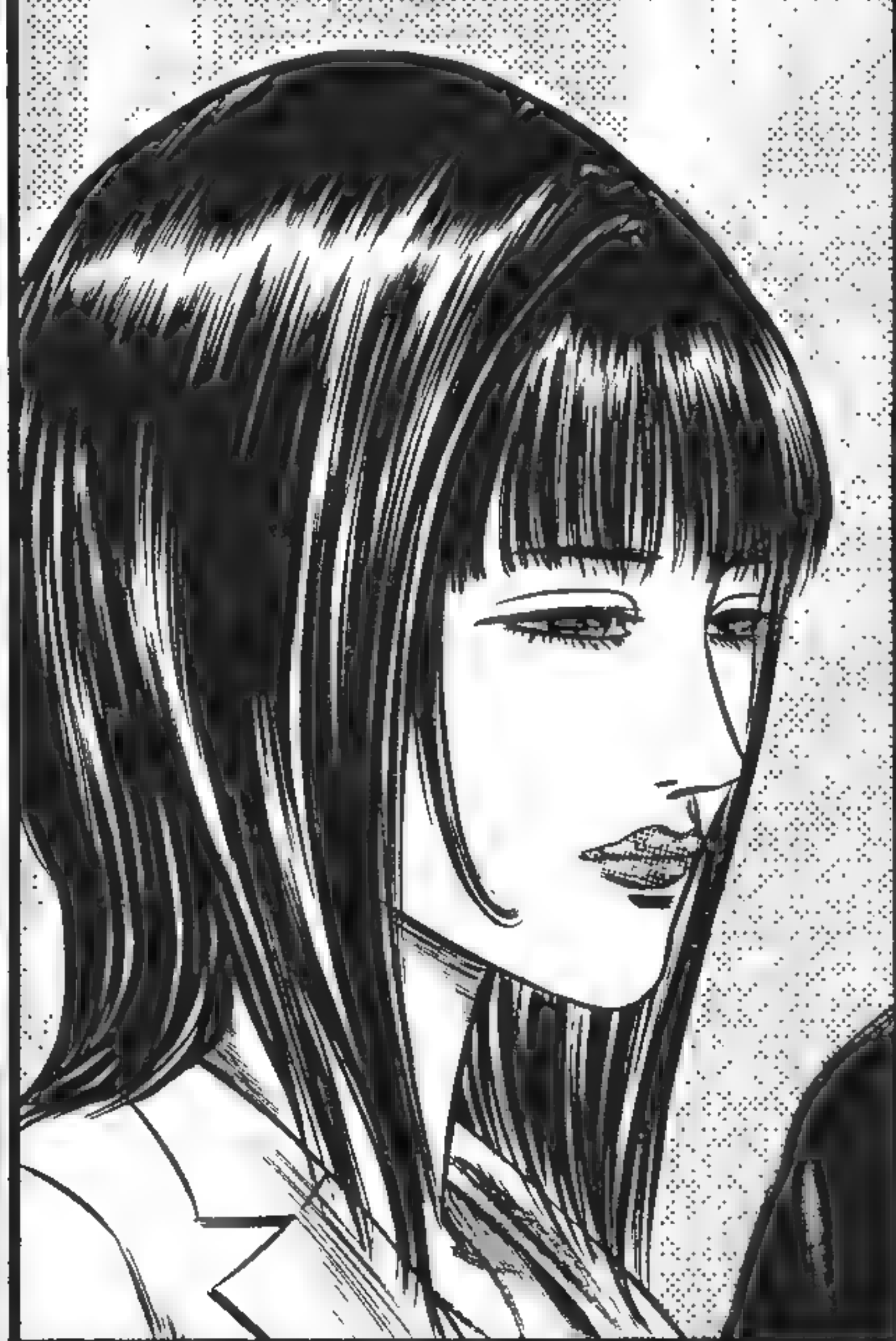












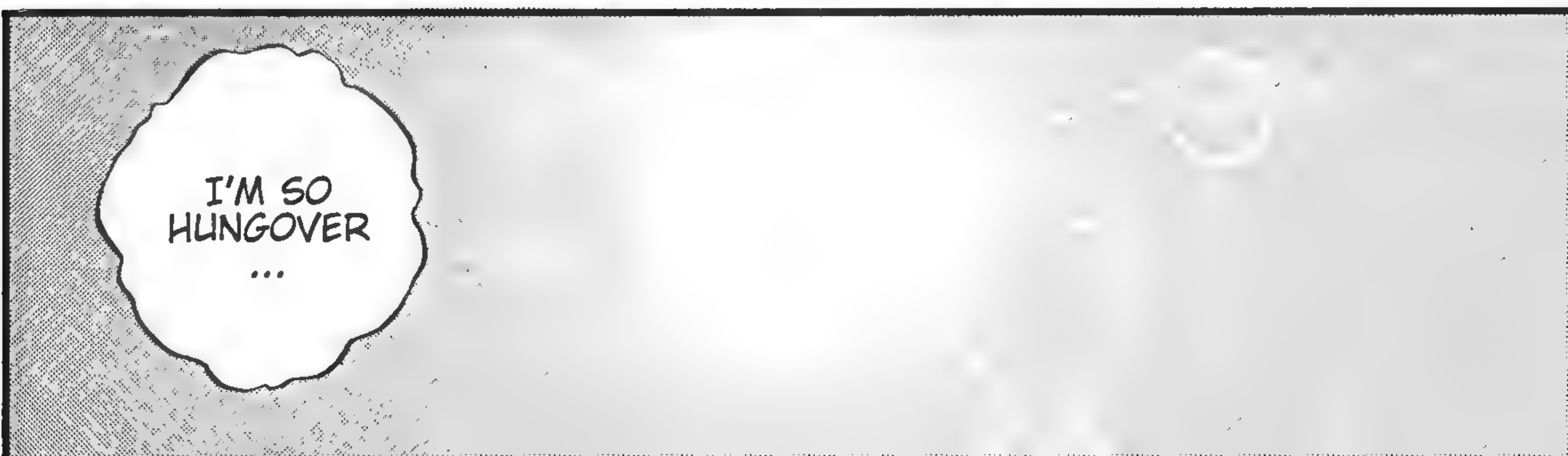




















MORNING,  
KEN-SAN.

MORNIN',  
CAR GUY!

YEAH. REAL  
"WOOD-  
PECKER IN  
THE SKULL"  
SITUATION.

HUNGOVER,  
HUH? KEH  
KEH KEH  
KEH!



WHAT?



HE  
LEFT.

BUT NEVER  
MIND ME.  
WHERE'D  
KATSUZAWA-  
SAN'S  
TENT GO?



AND IN EXCHANGE,  
WE SHAPE UP AN'  
BECOME MODEL  
CITIZENS. THEY'RE  
MAKIN' IT SOUND ALL  
NICE AN' MORAL, BUT  
ALL THEY REALLY  
WANT IS US 'N' OUR  
UGLY TENTS OUTTA  
THEIR PARKS.

THE TOKYO  
BIG SHOTS ARE  
CRACKIN' DOWN  
ON GUYS LIKE  
US. THEY'VE  
GOT THIS NEW  
"REINTEGRATION  
INITIATIVE"  
PROGRAM.  
IDEA IS, THEY  
FIND US CHEAP  
APARTMENTS...





SO NO ONE  
CAN PUT  
A TENT  
UP THERE  
AGAIN.

Keep  
Out

SO WHEN  
ONE OF US  
LEAVES...

THEY RUSH IN  
AND PUT ONE  
OF THEIR LITTLE  
"PAWS OFF THE  
GRASS" SIGNS  
IN THE VACATED  
SPOT...



'BOUT HALF  
THE TENTS IN  
THIS PARK HAVE  
BEEN CLEARED  
OUT ALREADY.

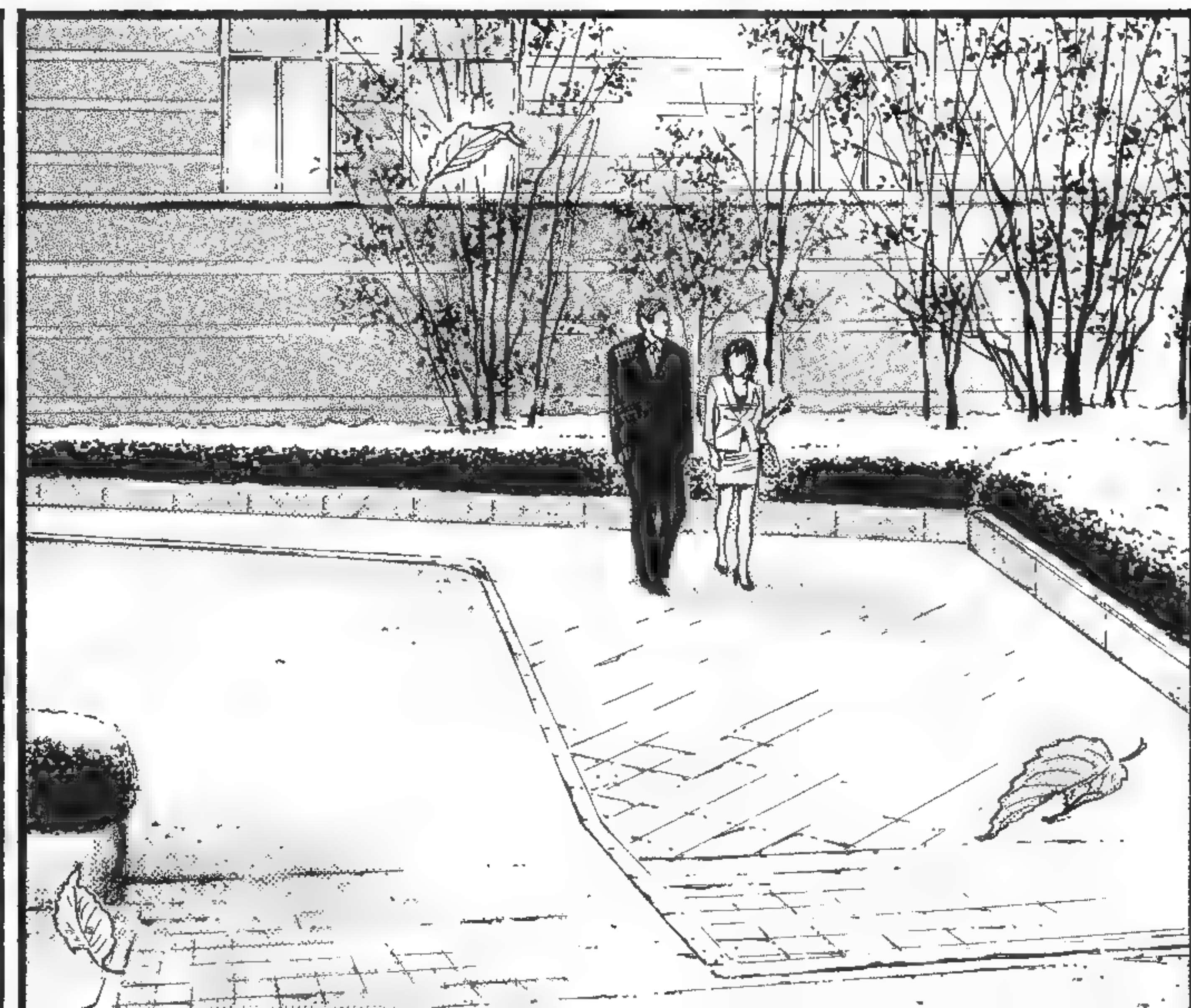
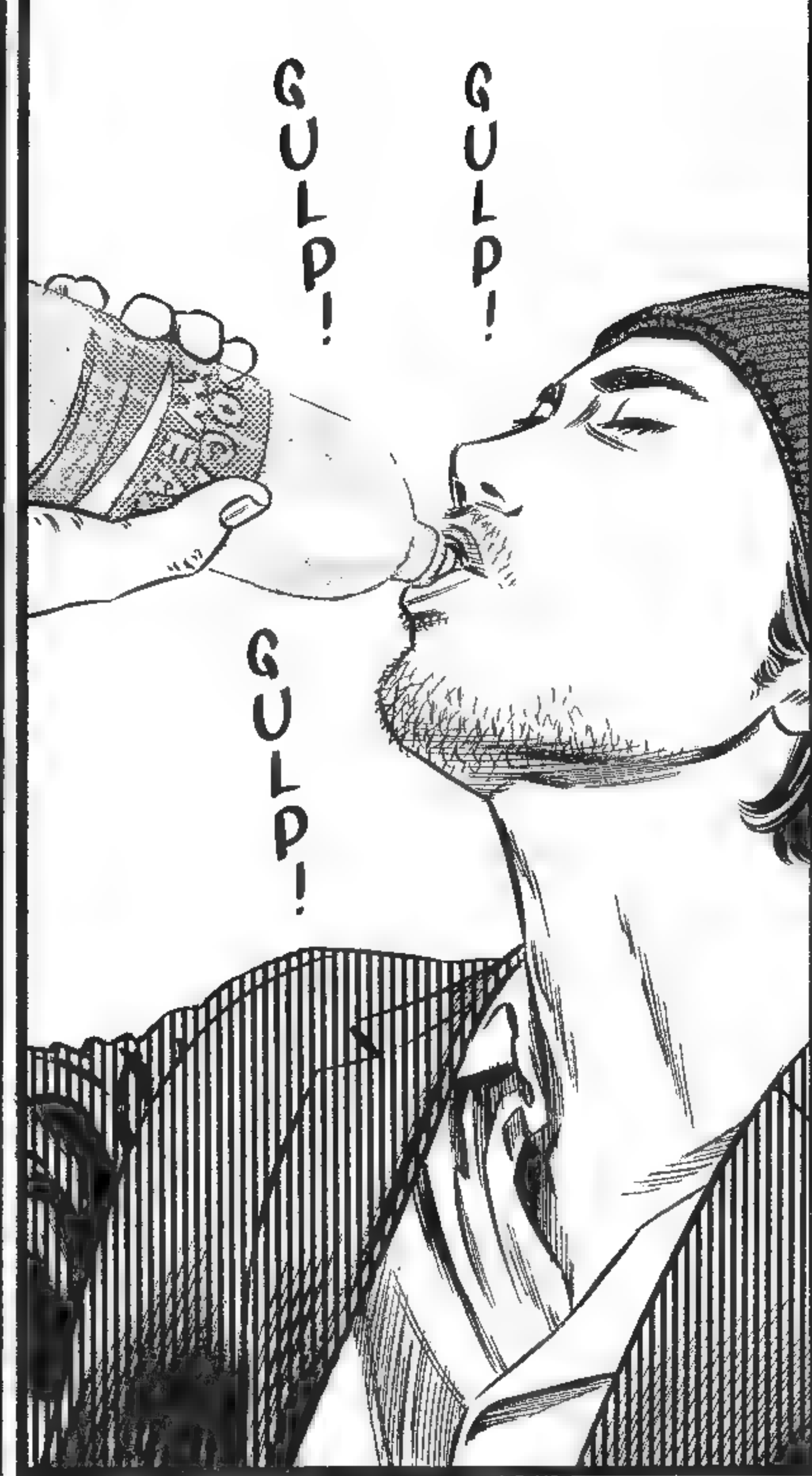
Keep  
Out

Keep  
Out

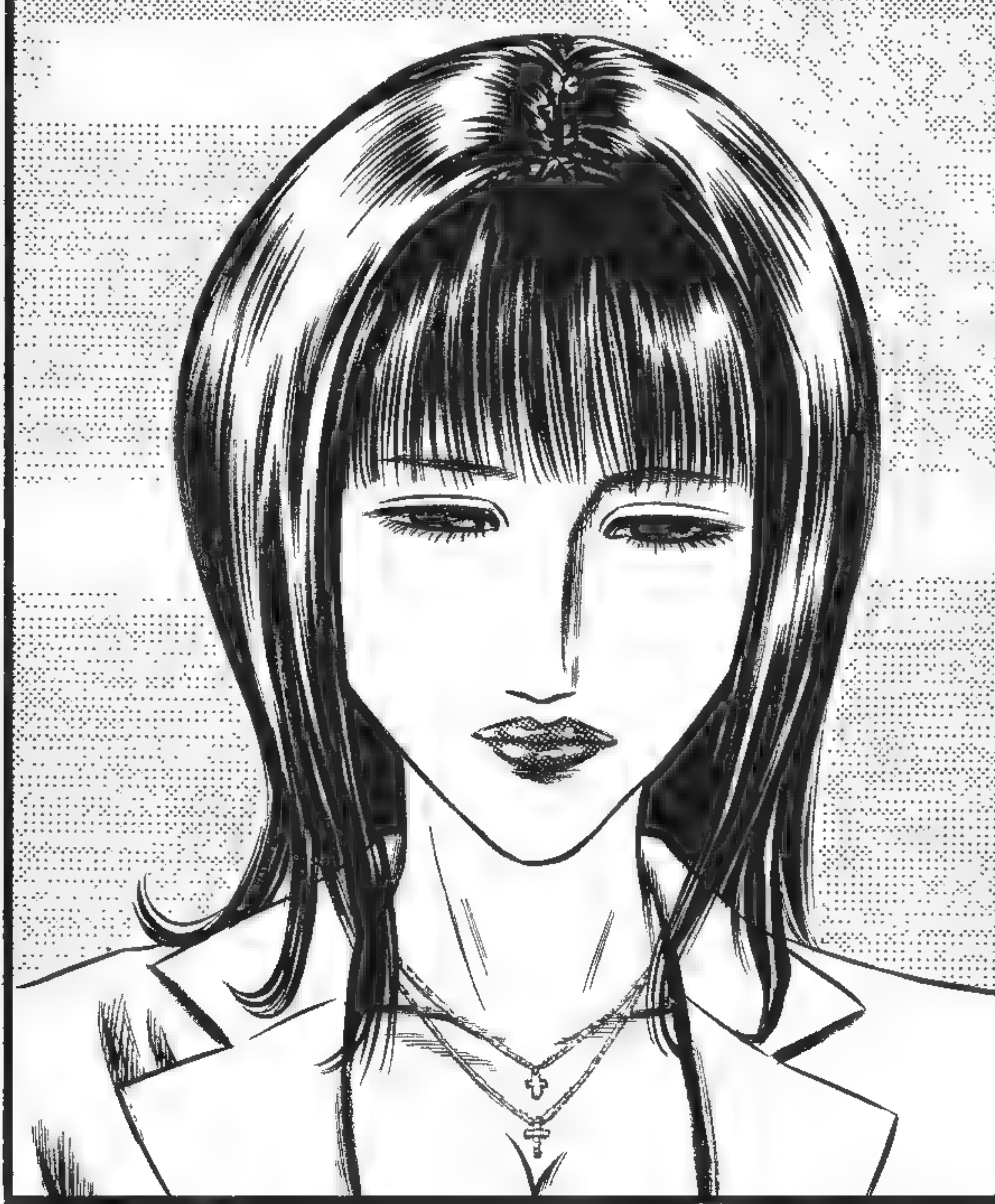




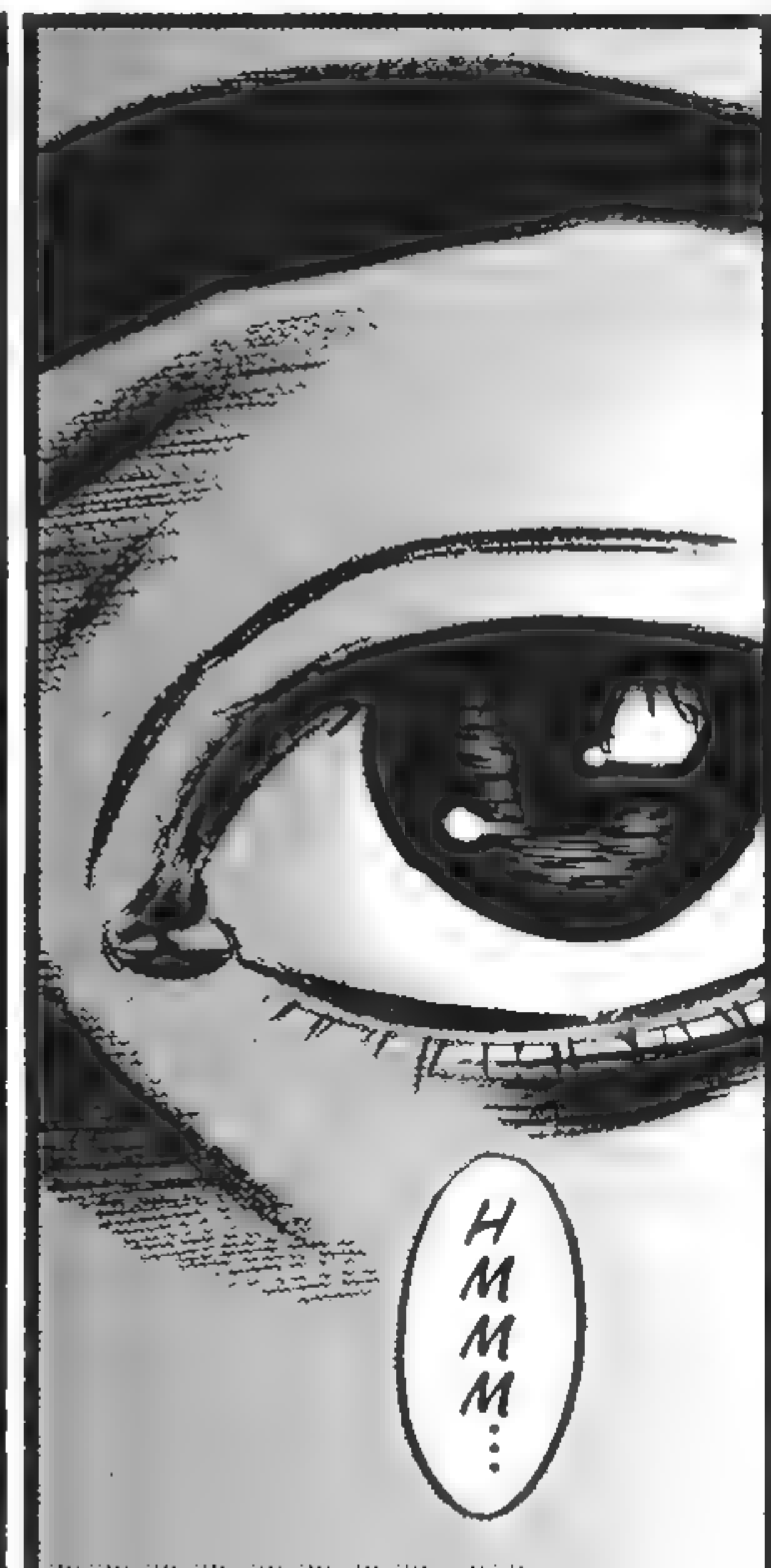
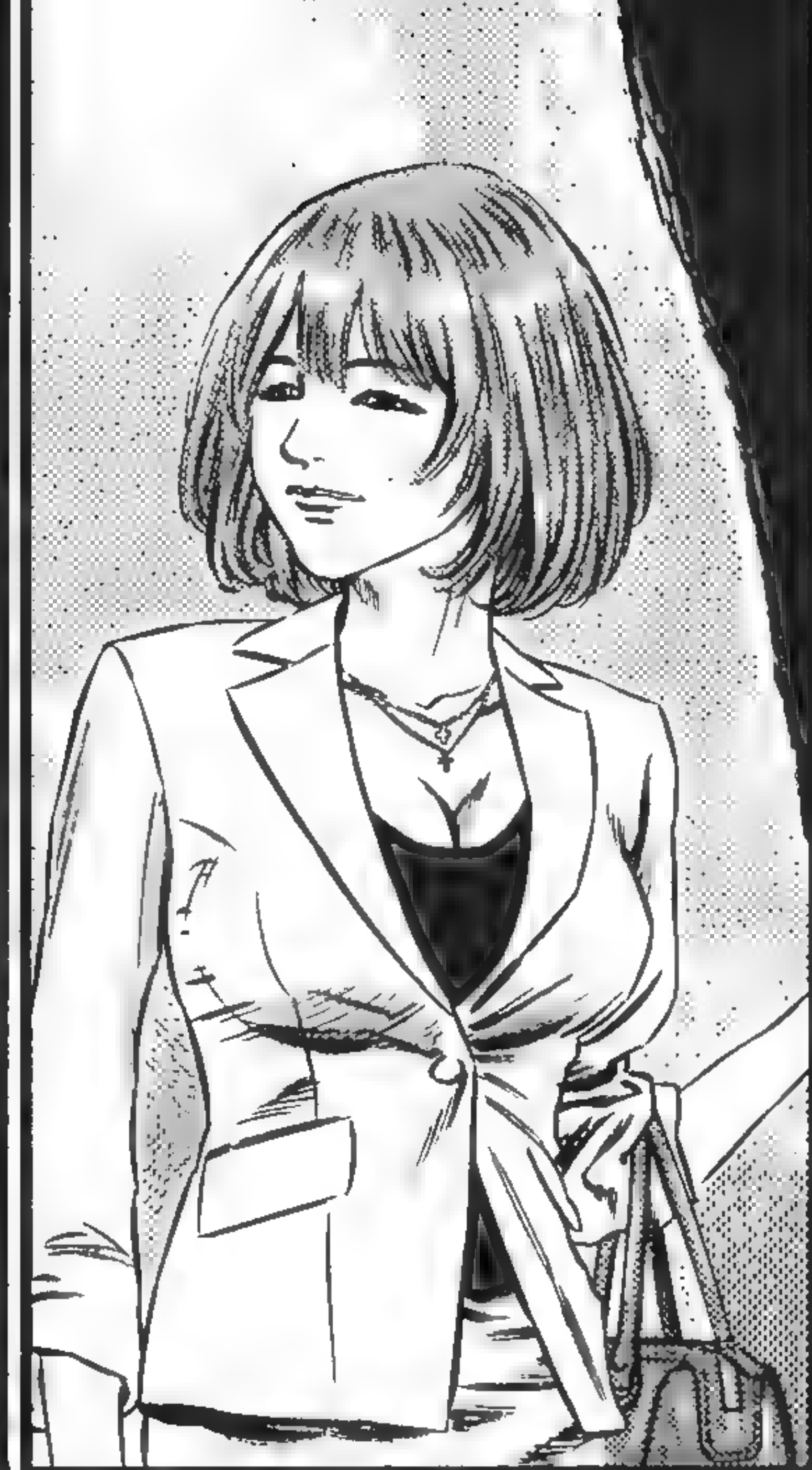
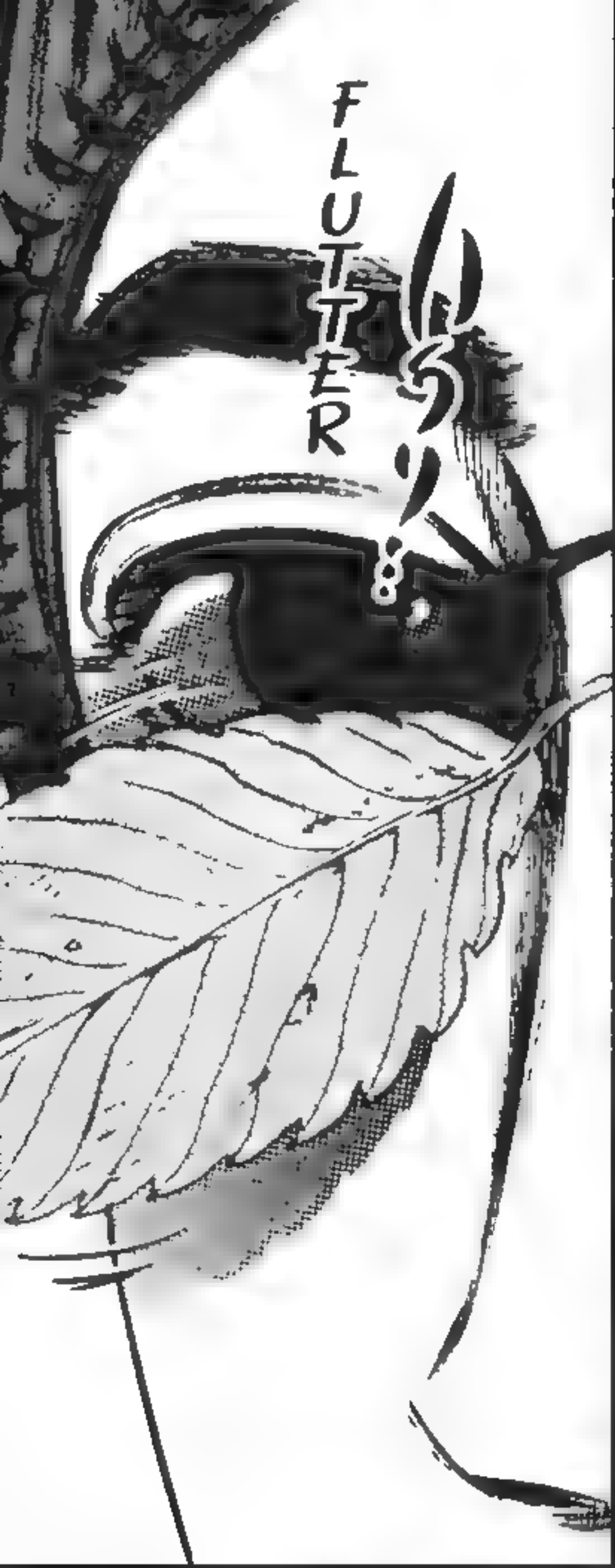




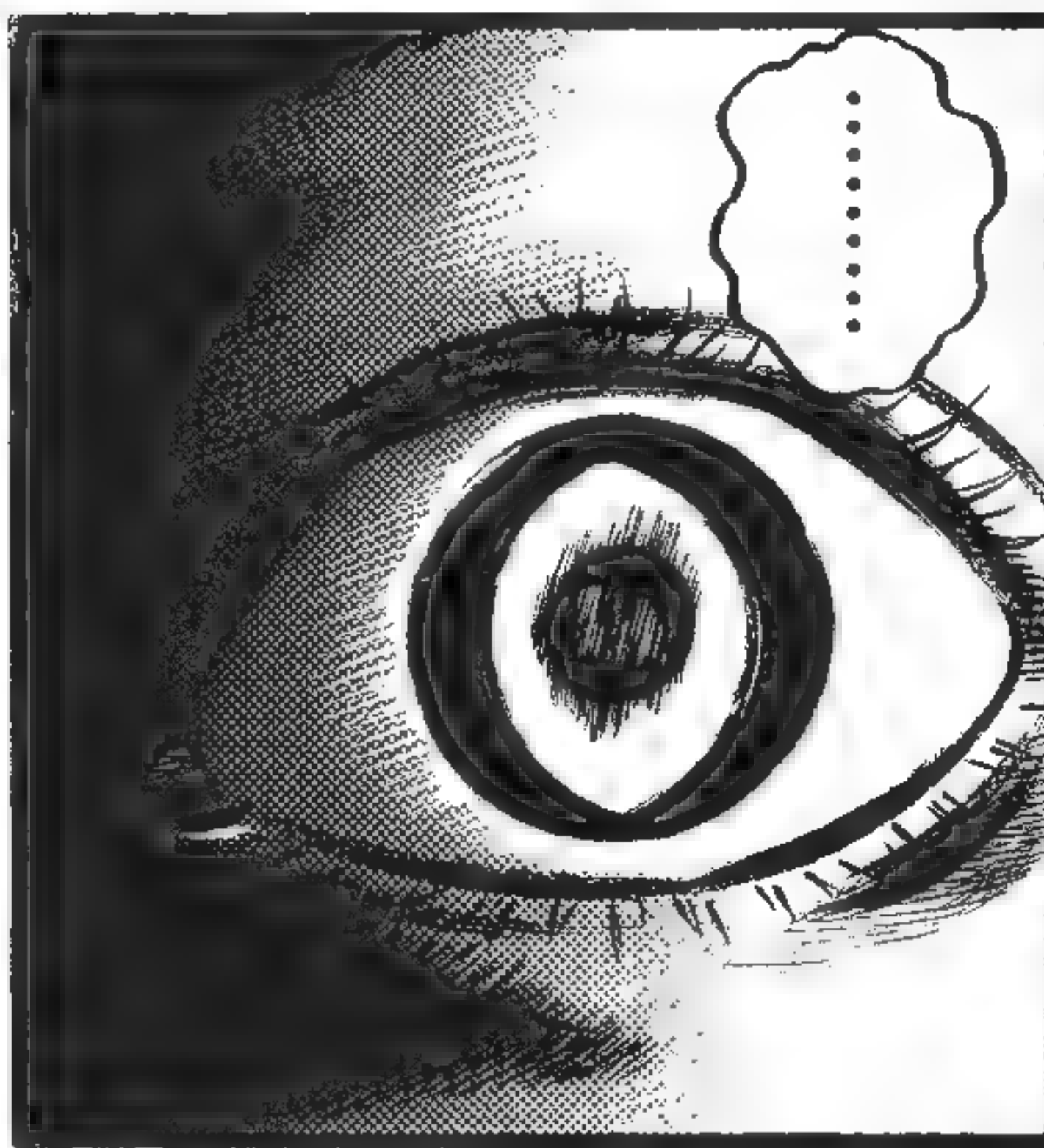




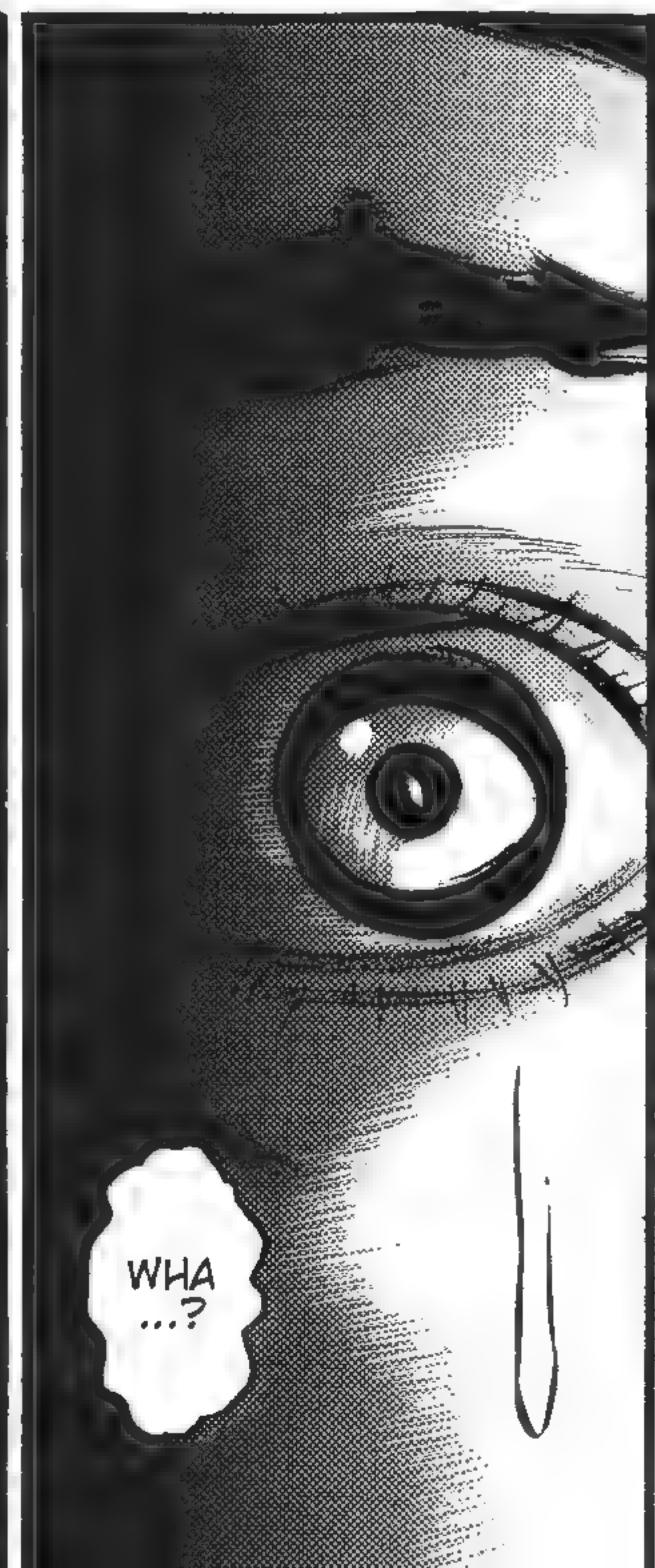




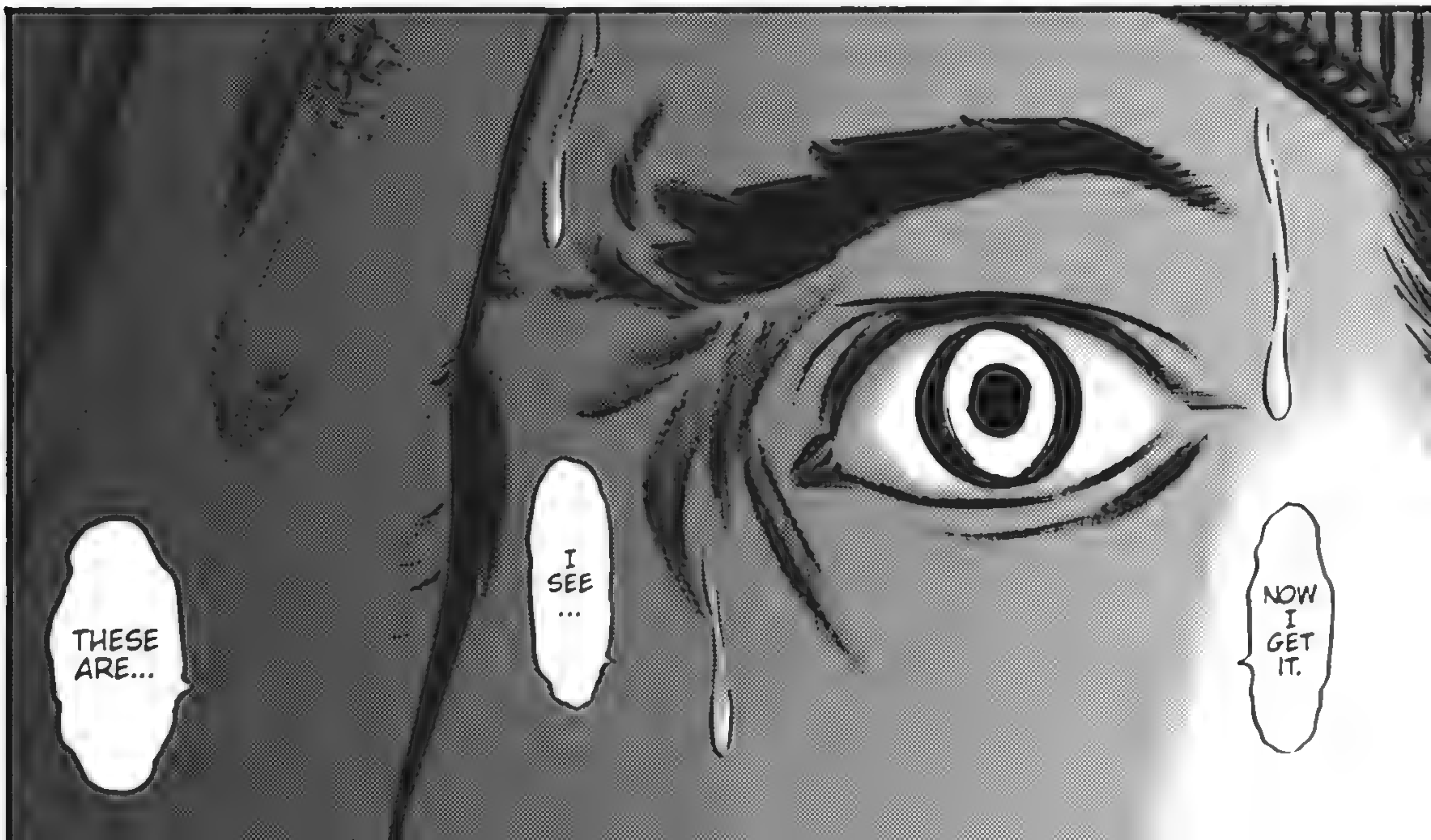
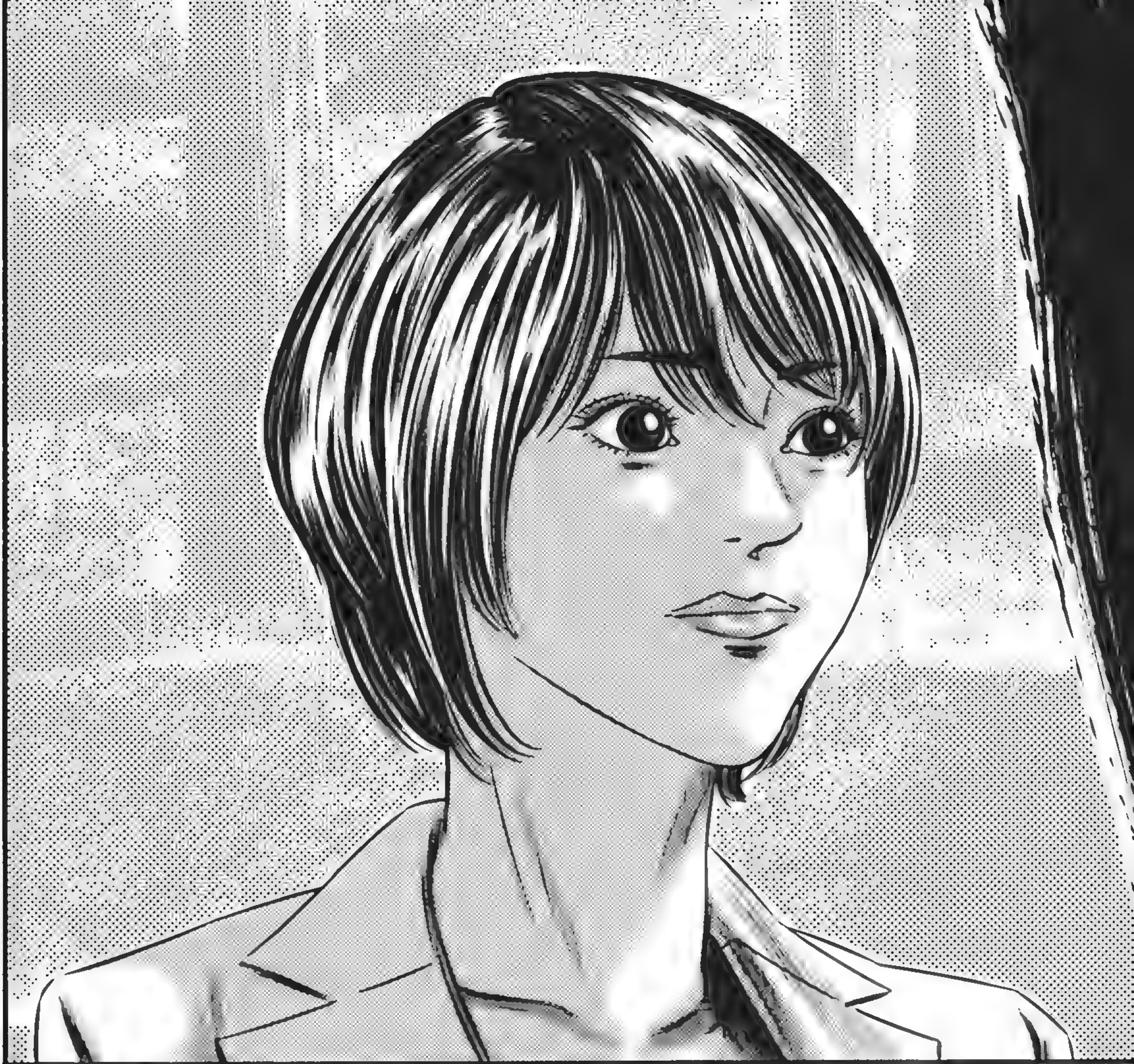


















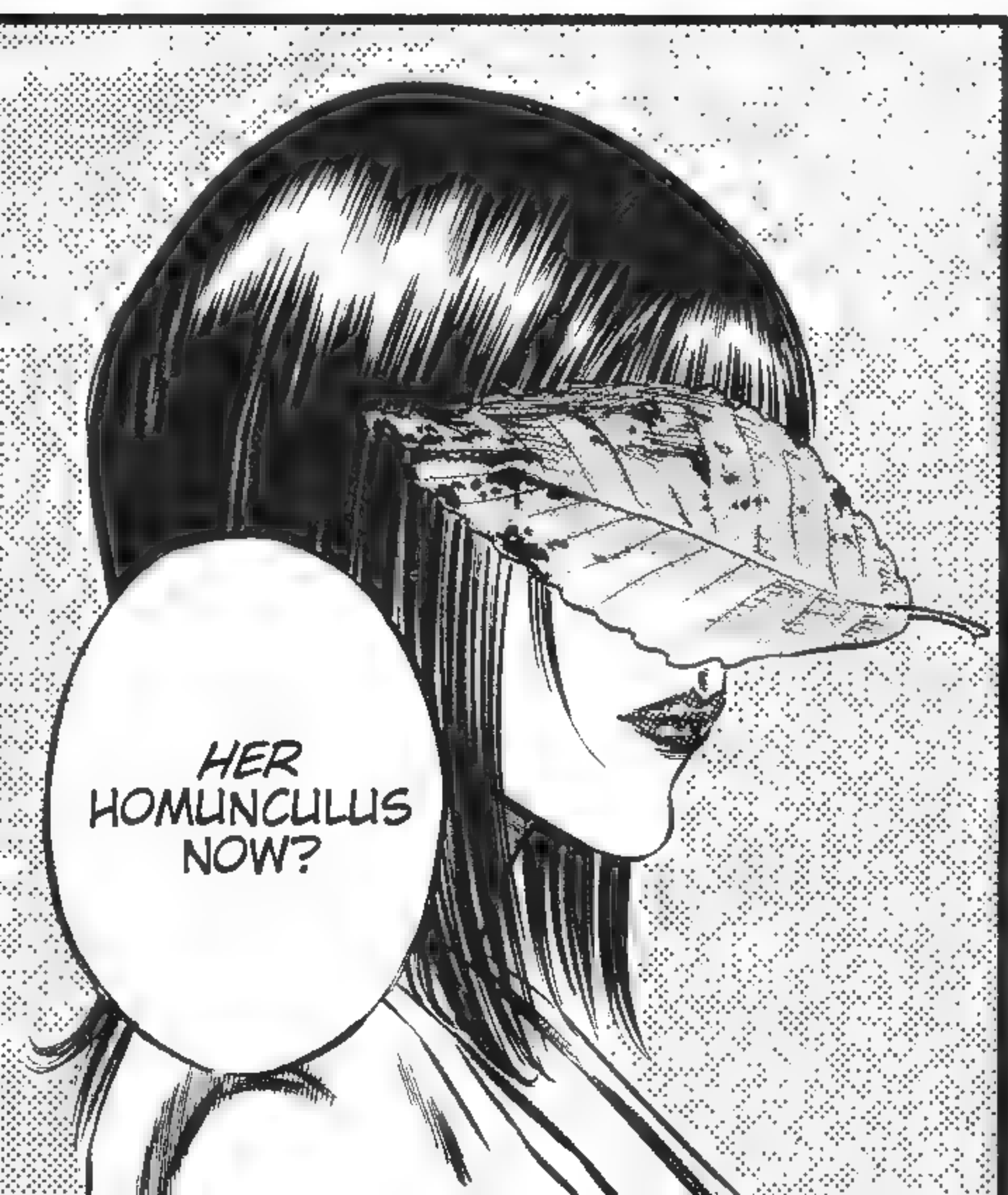
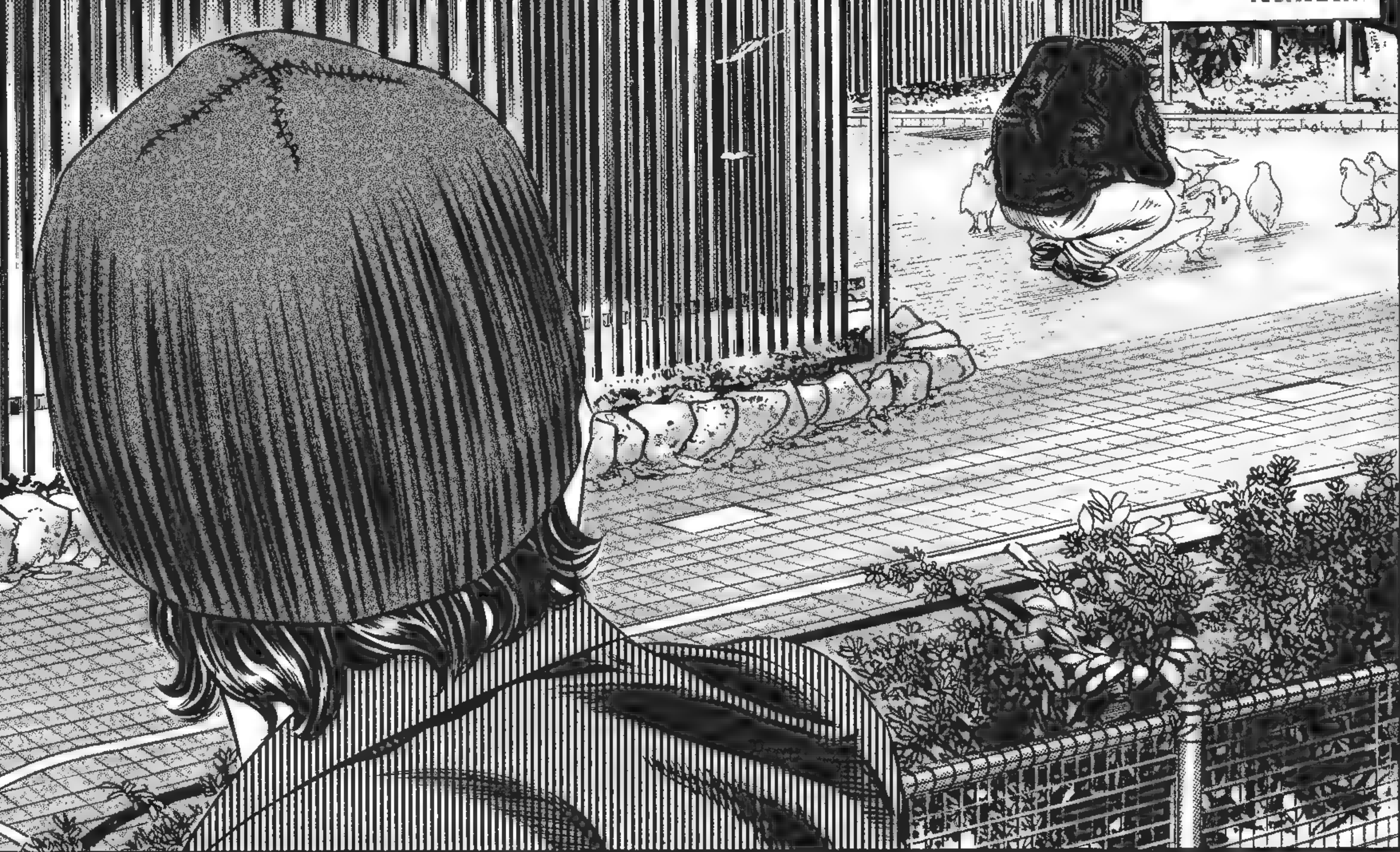


SHE'S...  
A  
HOMUN-  
CULUS  
?!













WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING  
HERE?! CAN'T  
YOU, LIKE...  
CALL FIRST?!

N-  
NAKOSHI-  
SAN?!



ACK!

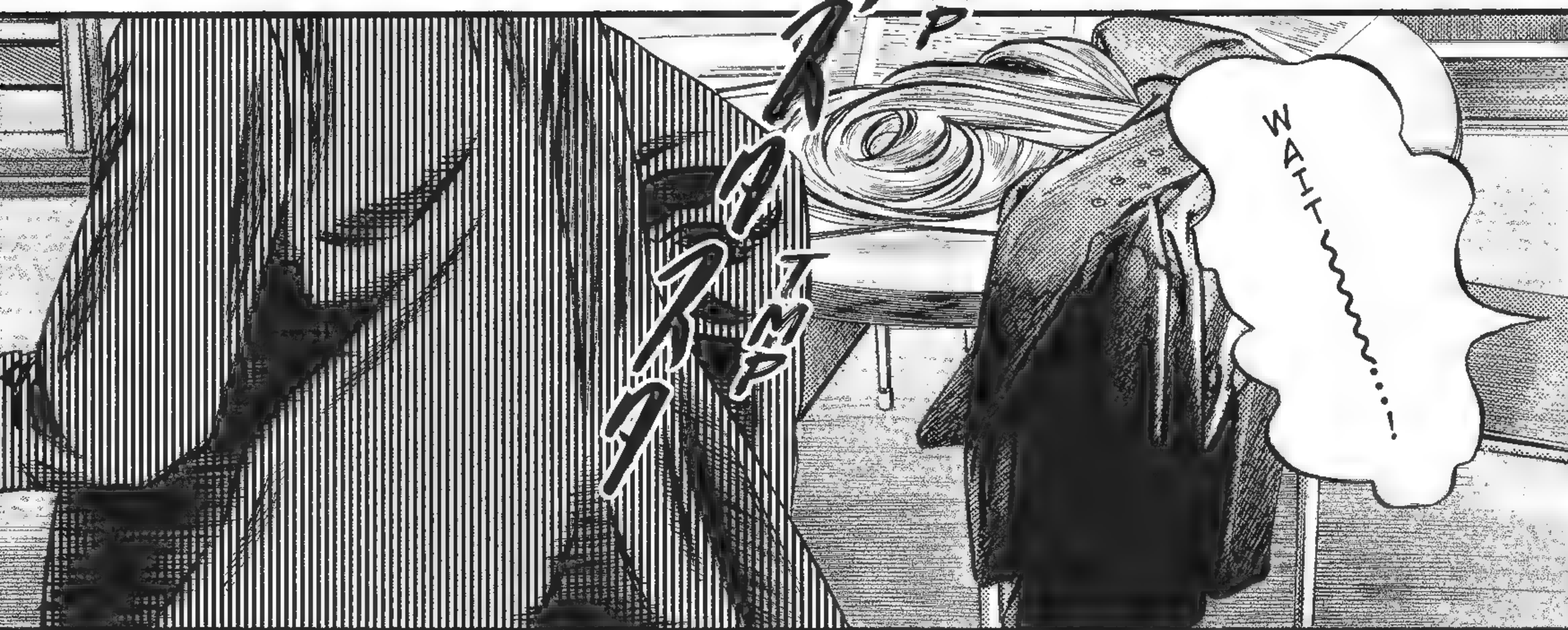
GA-CHAK



SHUT  
UP AND  
LEMME IN!

UH, IT'S  
NOT A GOOD  
TIME. I'M,  
UH--









HUH?



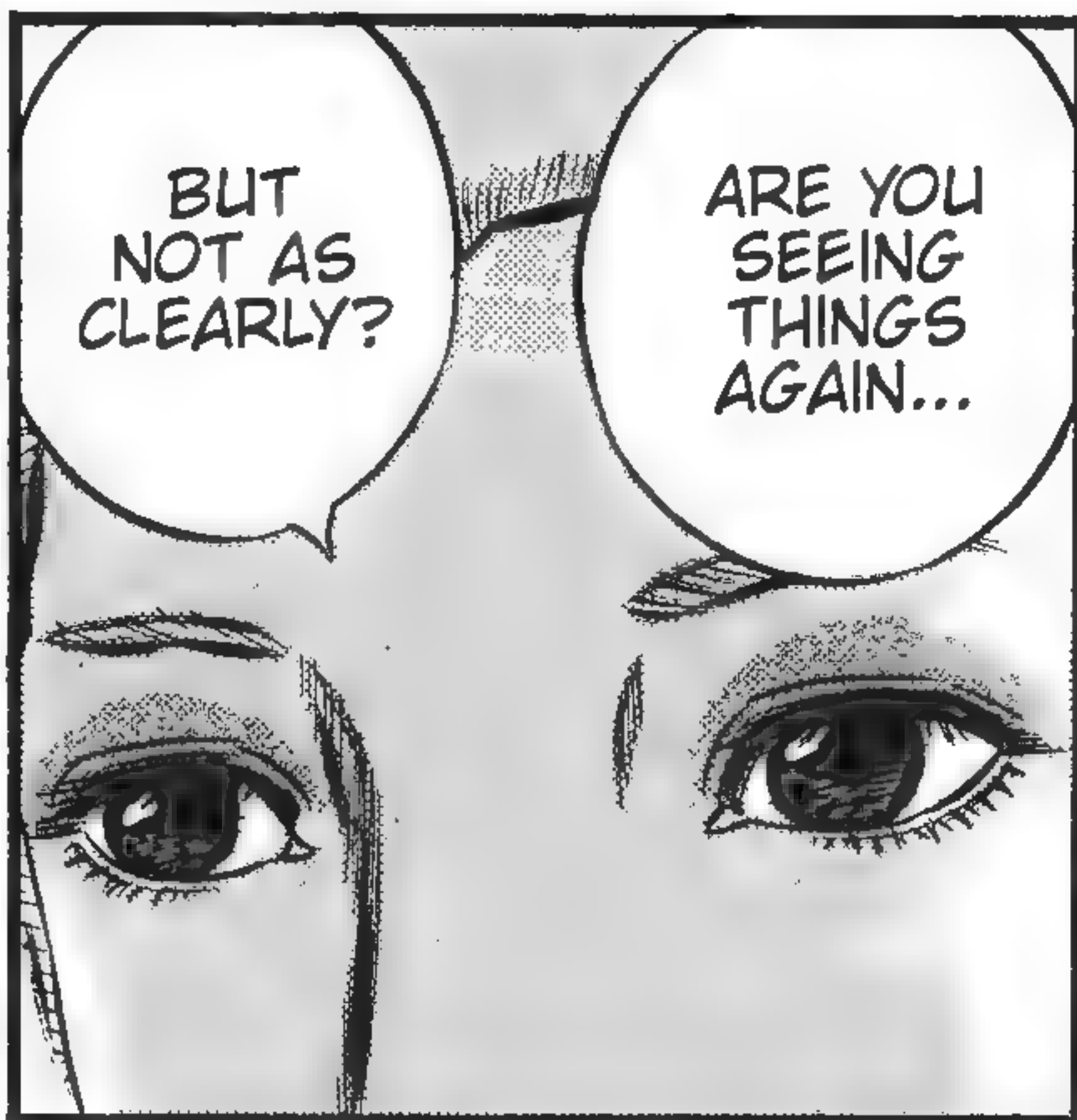
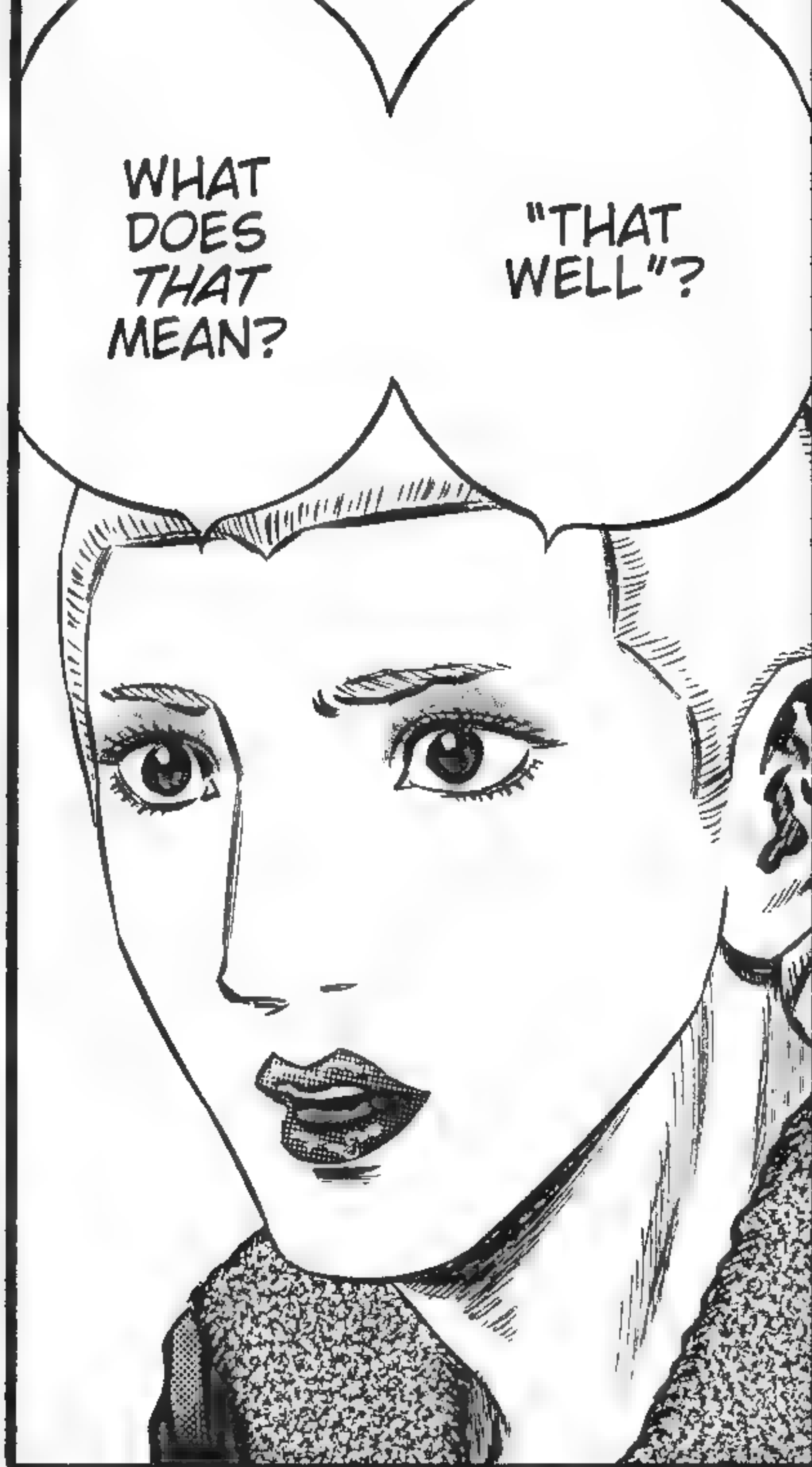
I STILL  
CAN'T  
SEE 'EM.



!

THE  
HOMUNCULI.  
I CAN'T SEE  
THEM THAT  
WELL...









I ALREADY  
TOLD YOU,  
THE SIZE HAS  
NOTHING TO  
DO WITH IT!

YEAH,  
BUT...



NAKOSHI-  
SAN, GIVE  
ME A  
BREAK!

UGH.  
THAT  
AGAIN?!



THE SIZE OF  
THE HOLE  
HAS ZERO  
BEARING ON  
HOW THESE  
DELLUSIONS  
MANIFEST!



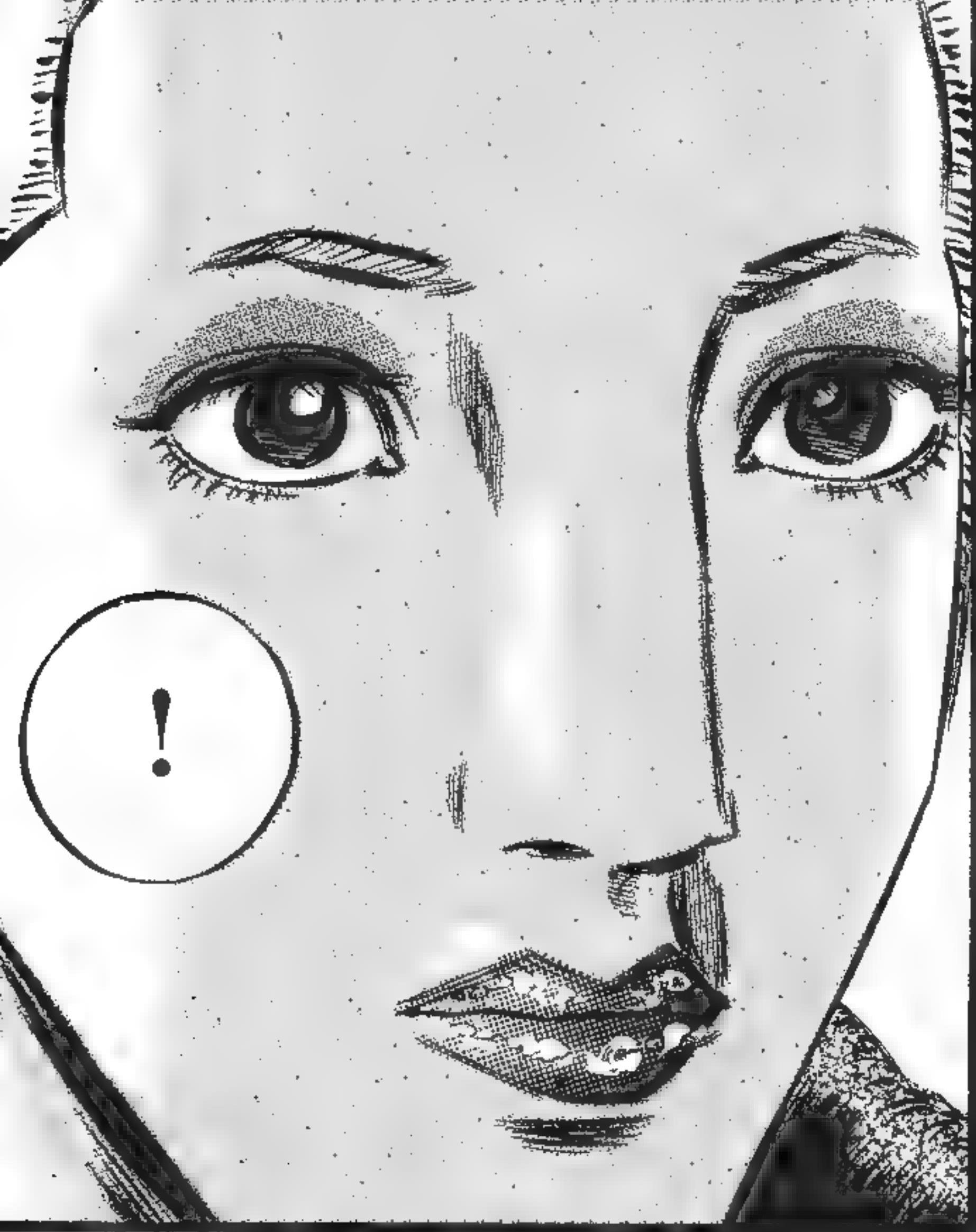
FINE.  
MAYBE IT  
IS ALL IN  
MY HEAD.



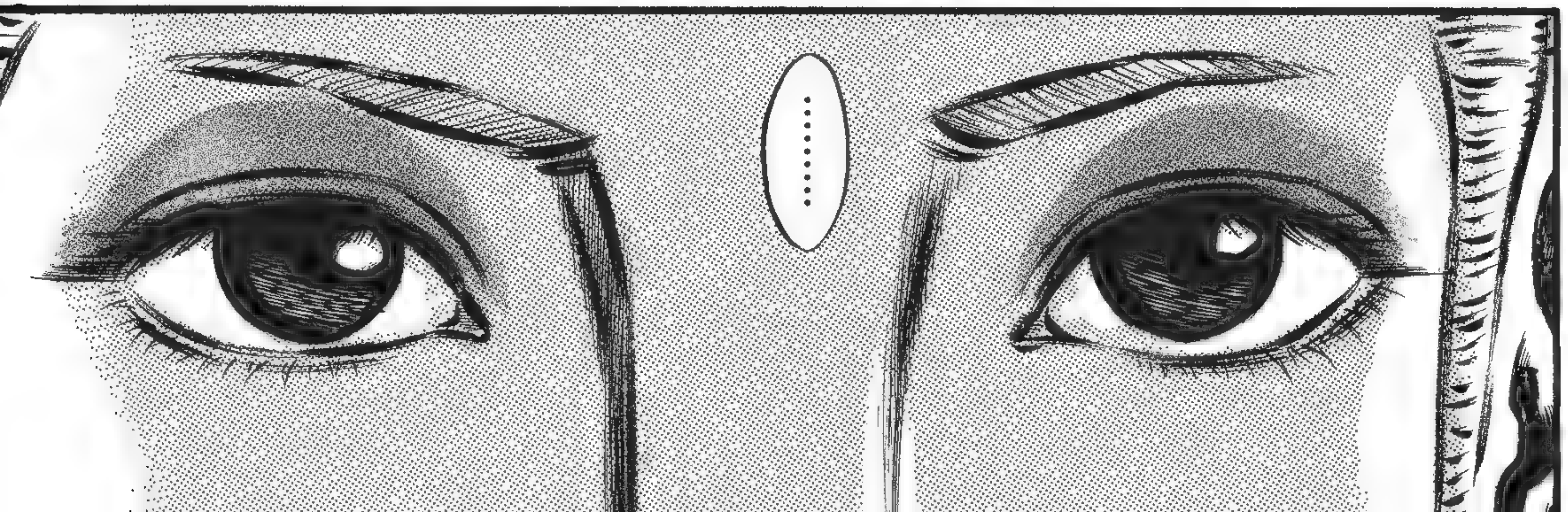
THESE  
"HOMUNCULI" ARE  
**DELLUSIONS!**  
HALLUCINATIONS  
COOKED UP BY  
YOUR OWN MIND  
THANKS TO A  
PLACEBO EFFECT!

I'VE TOLD  
YOU LIKE,  
A HUNDRED  
TIMES!

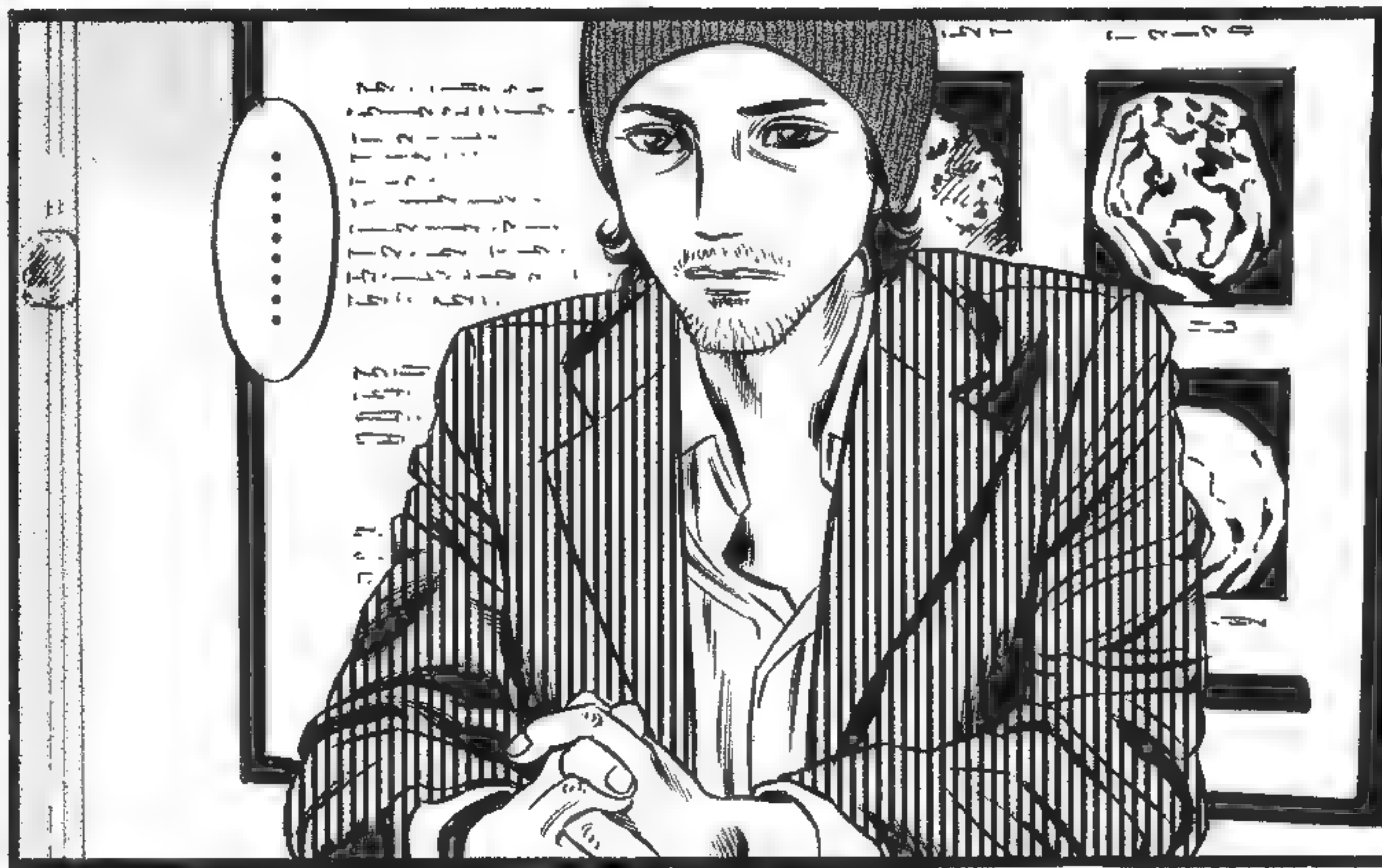
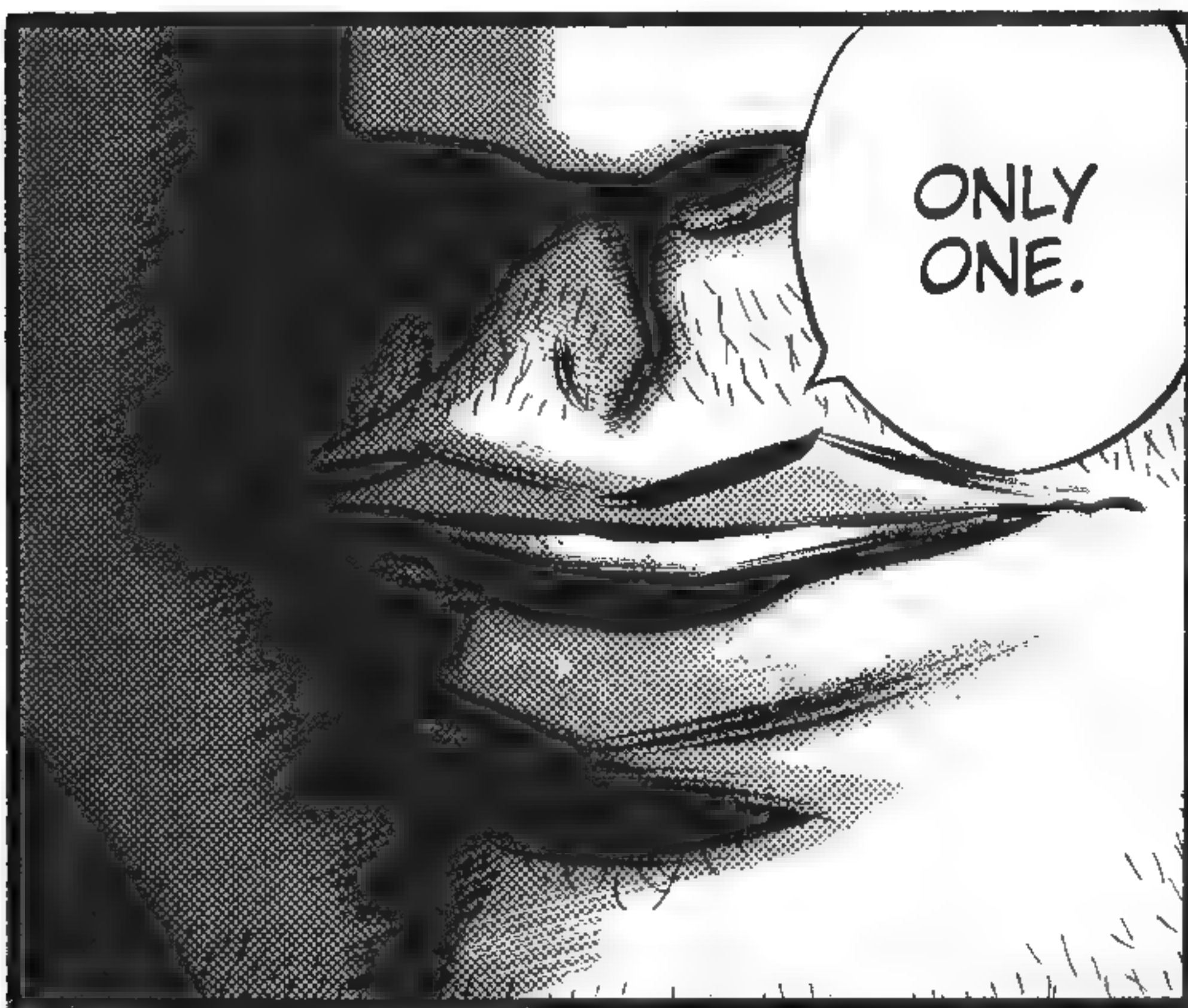




SO IF I  
SAY THIS  
PLACEBO  
WILL WORK,  
THEN IT'LL  
WORK.









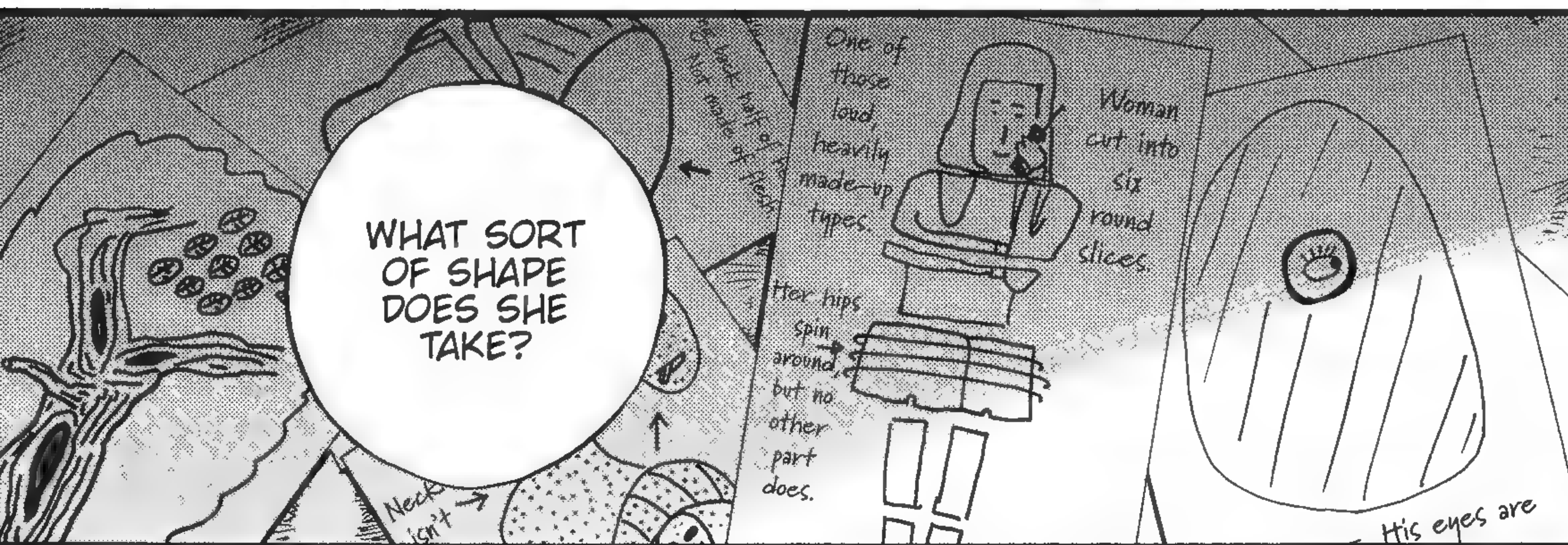


IT'S THE ONLY ONE LEFT.

YEAH. JUST HERS.

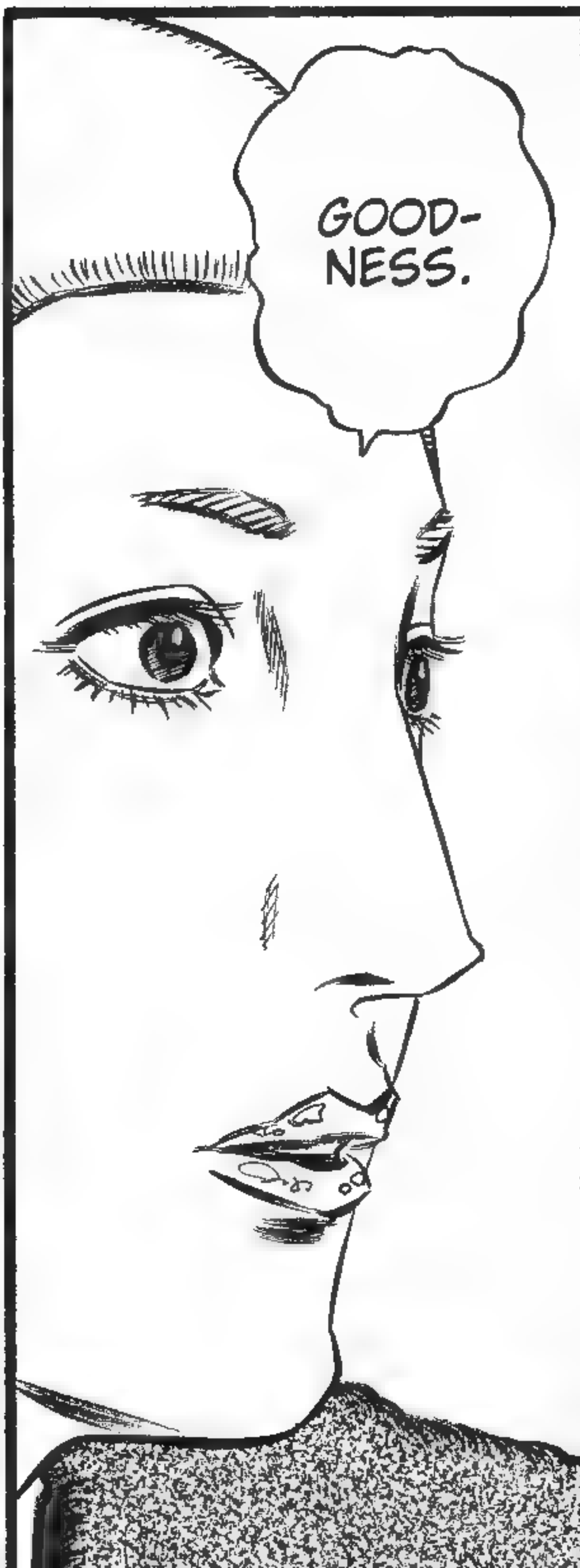


THAT'S IT?



OF EVERY WOMAN I'VE SLEPT WITH.

IT'S LIKE A WHIRLING KALEIDOSCOPE...

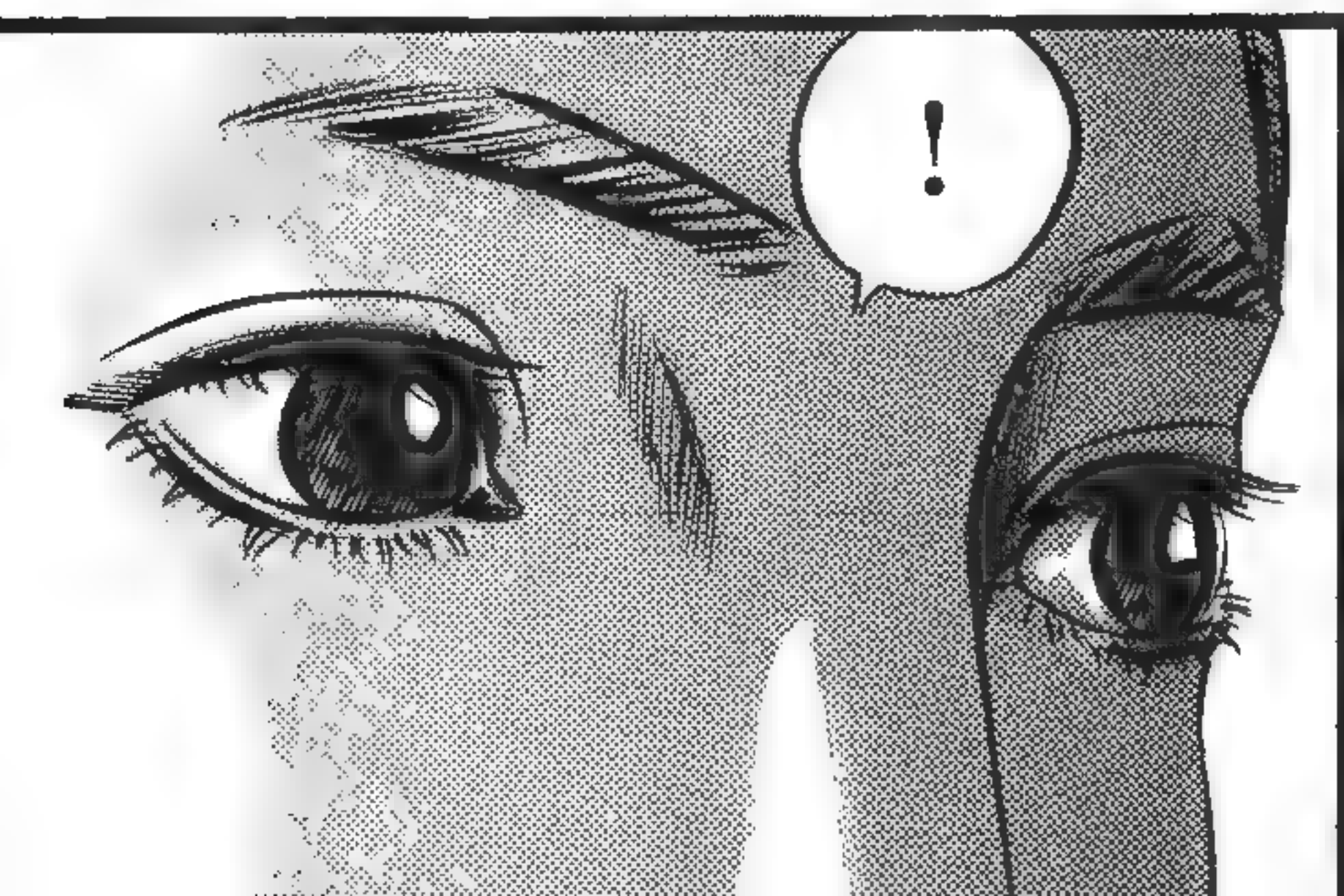


GOOD-NESS.



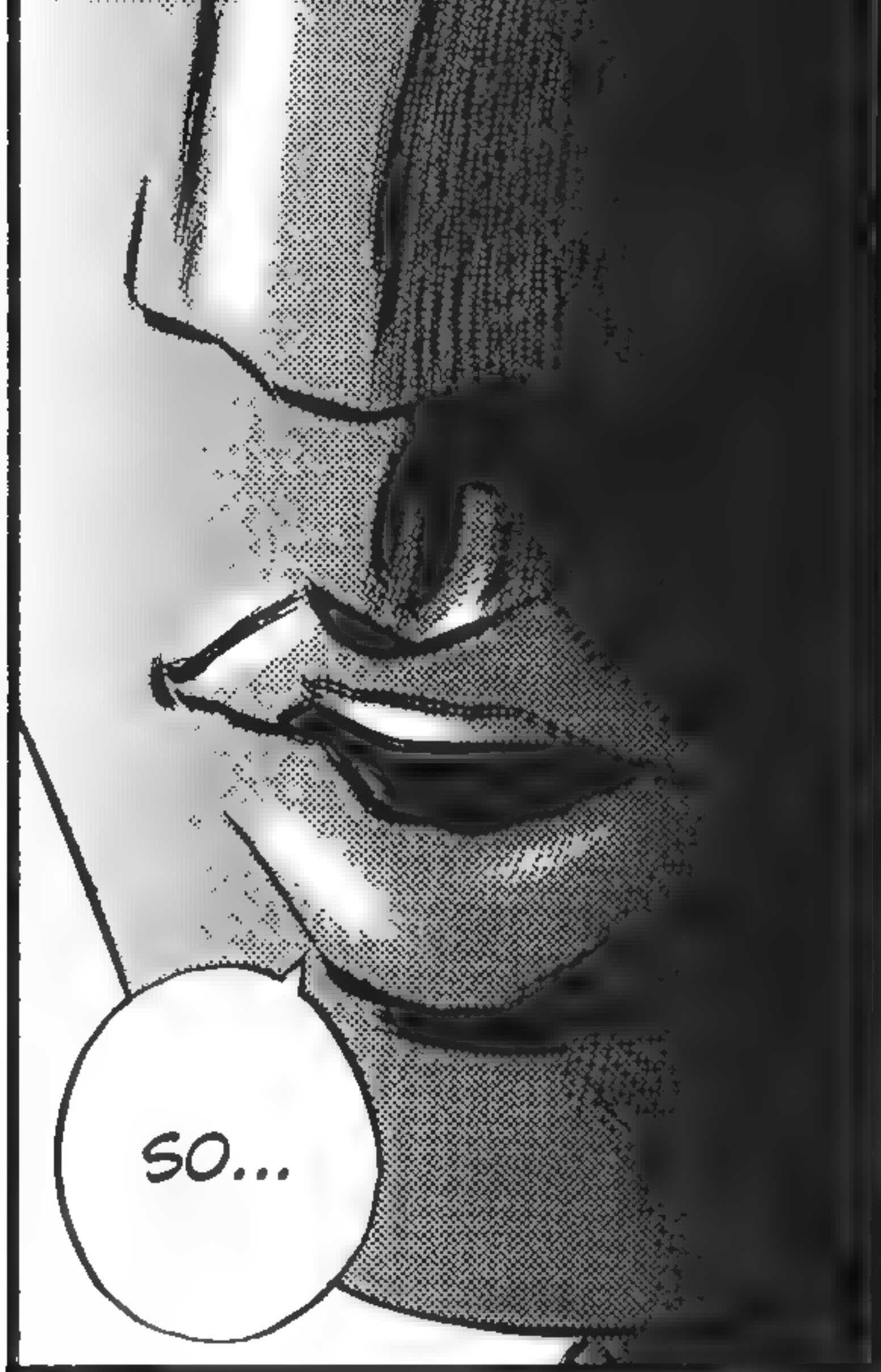
BUT HER FACE CHANGES CONSTANTLY.

MOSTLY NORMAL.



!





SO...



YEAH.

SHE TAKES  
THE FORM  
OF WOMEN  
YOU'VE HAD  
RELATIONS  
WITH?



WHAT ABOUT  
THAT WOMAN  
WHO COULD SEE  
HOMUNCULI? HAS  
THIS FACE-THIEF  
EVER WORN HER  
FACE?

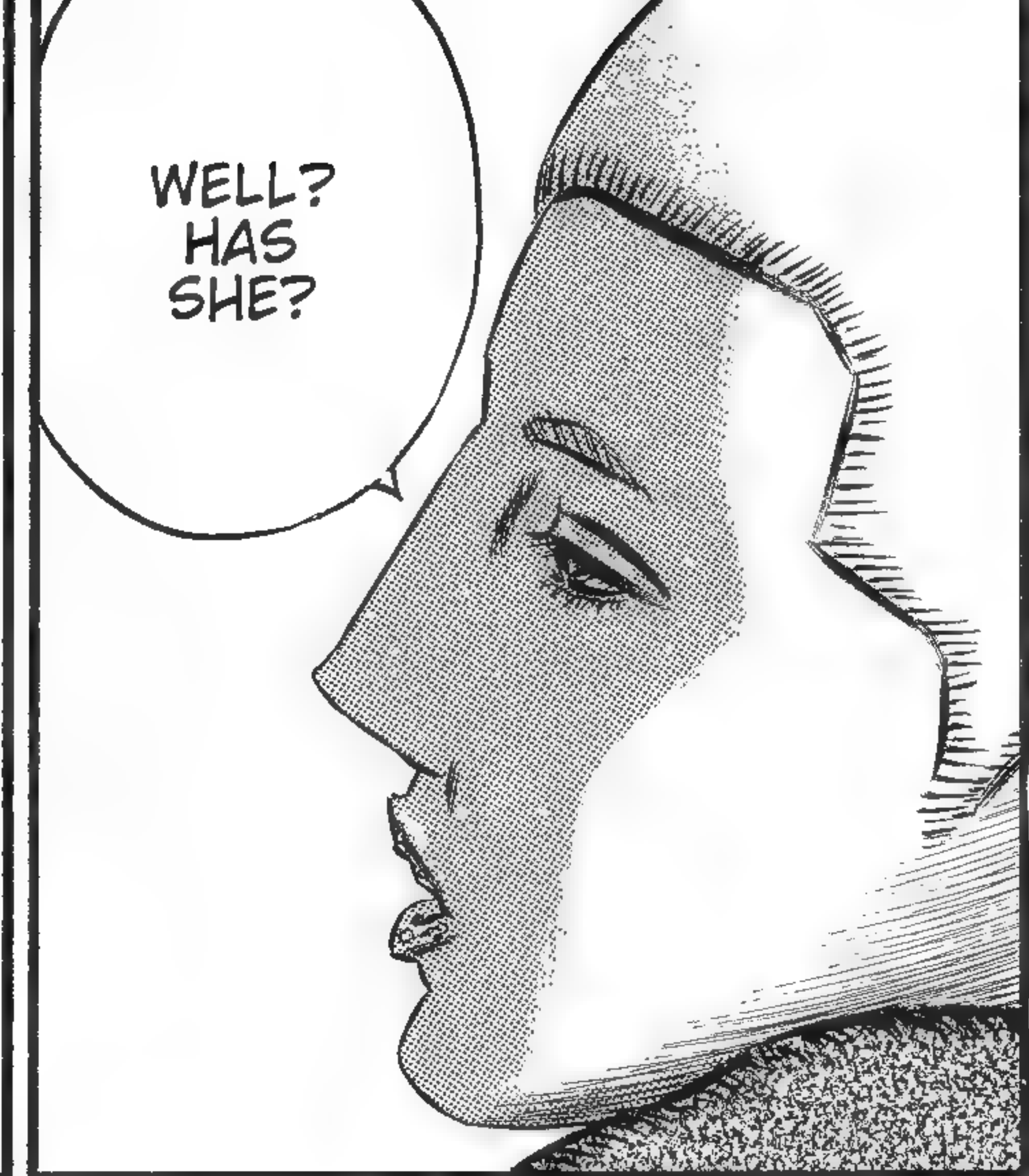


?!





NO.



WELL?  
HAS  
SHE?



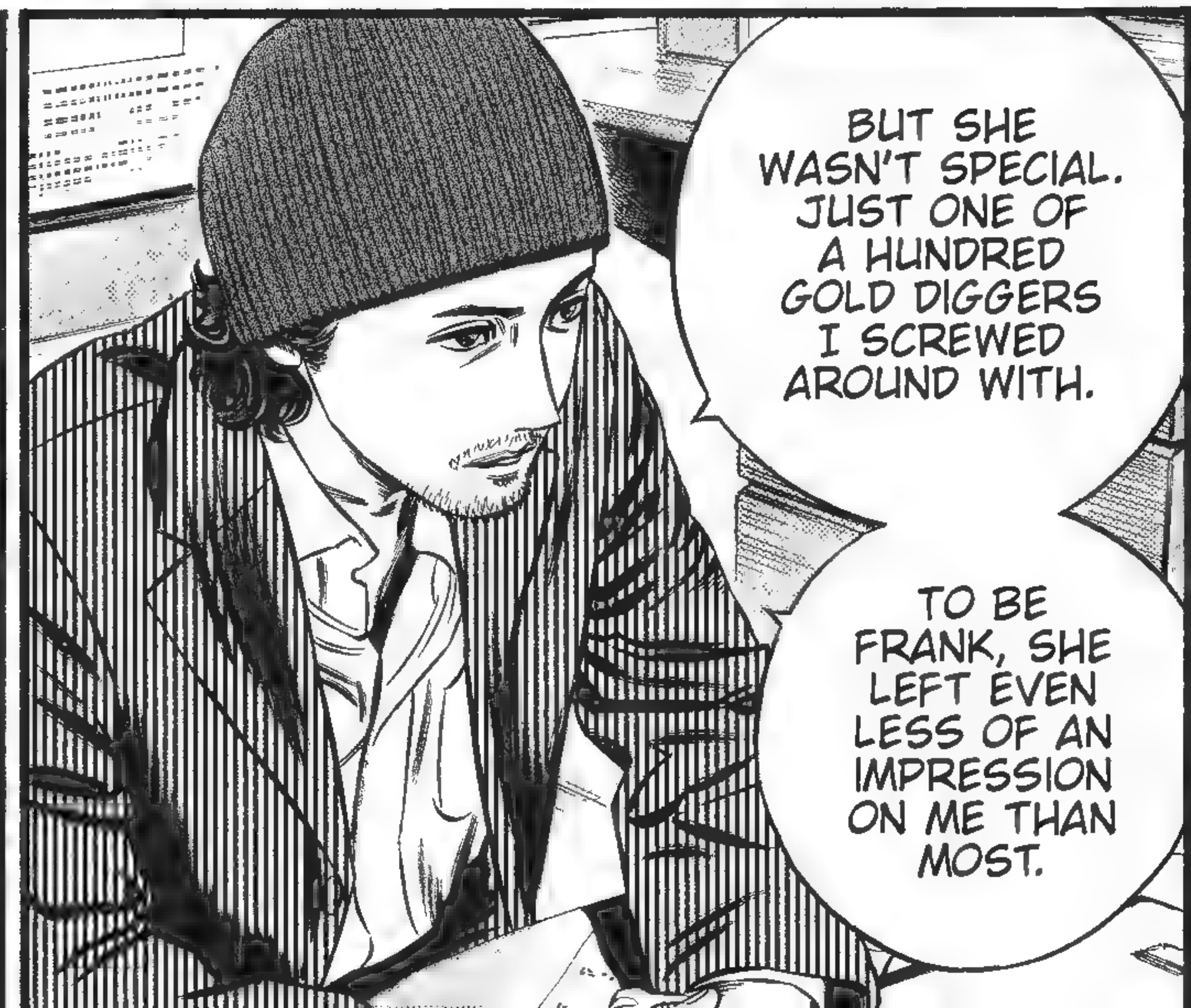
I  
HAVE.

AND HAVE  
YOU EVER MET  
THIS WOMAN  
WITH THE  
HOMUNCULUS  
BEFORE?



WHY HER  
THEN?

HMMM...



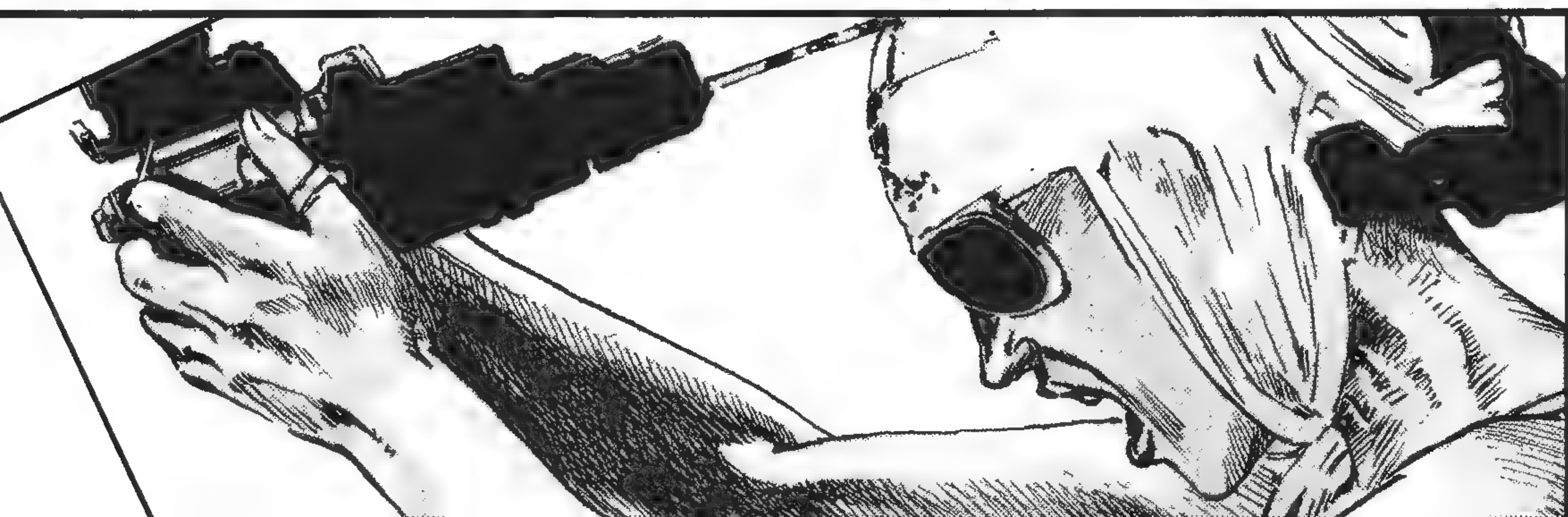
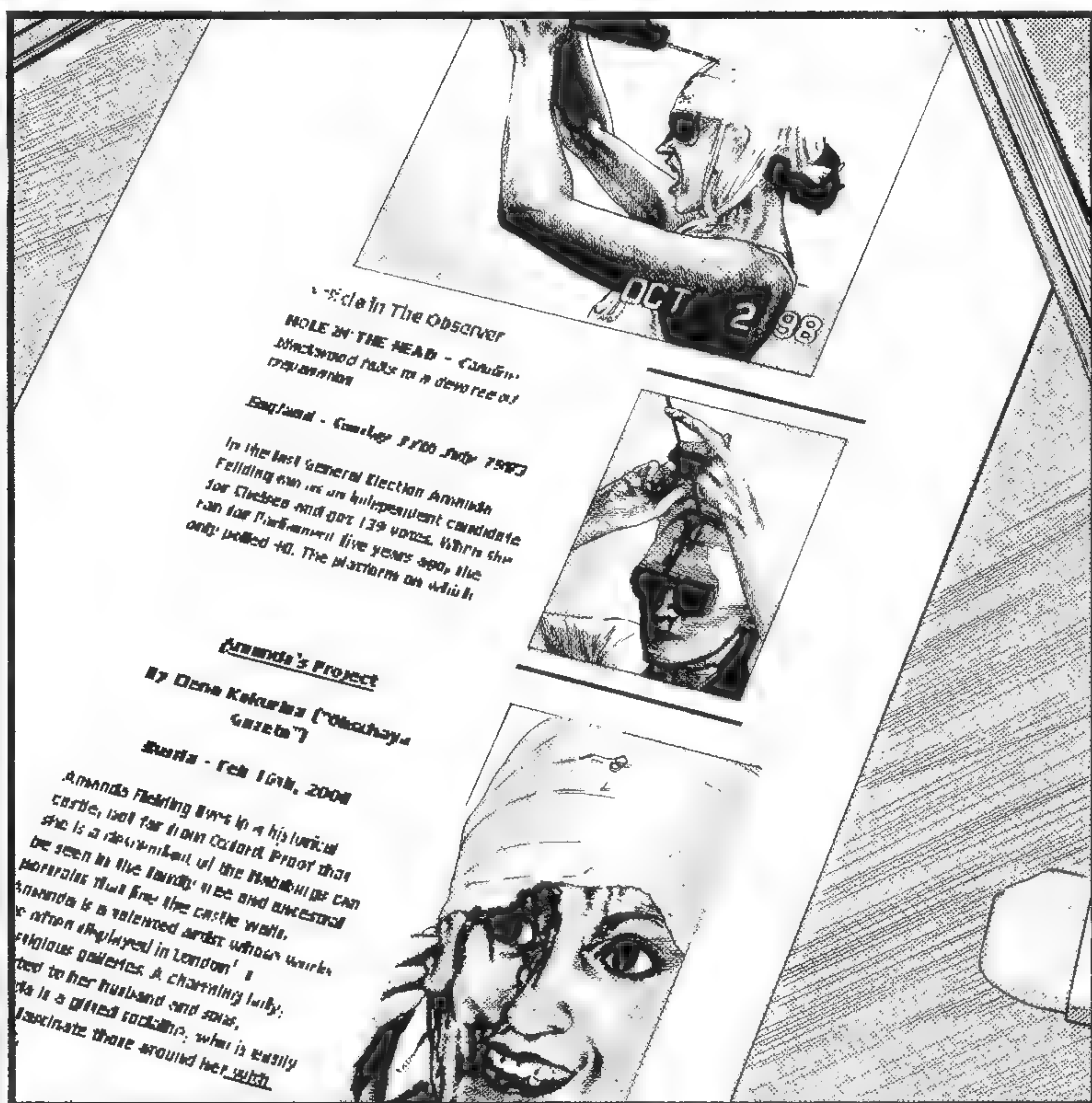
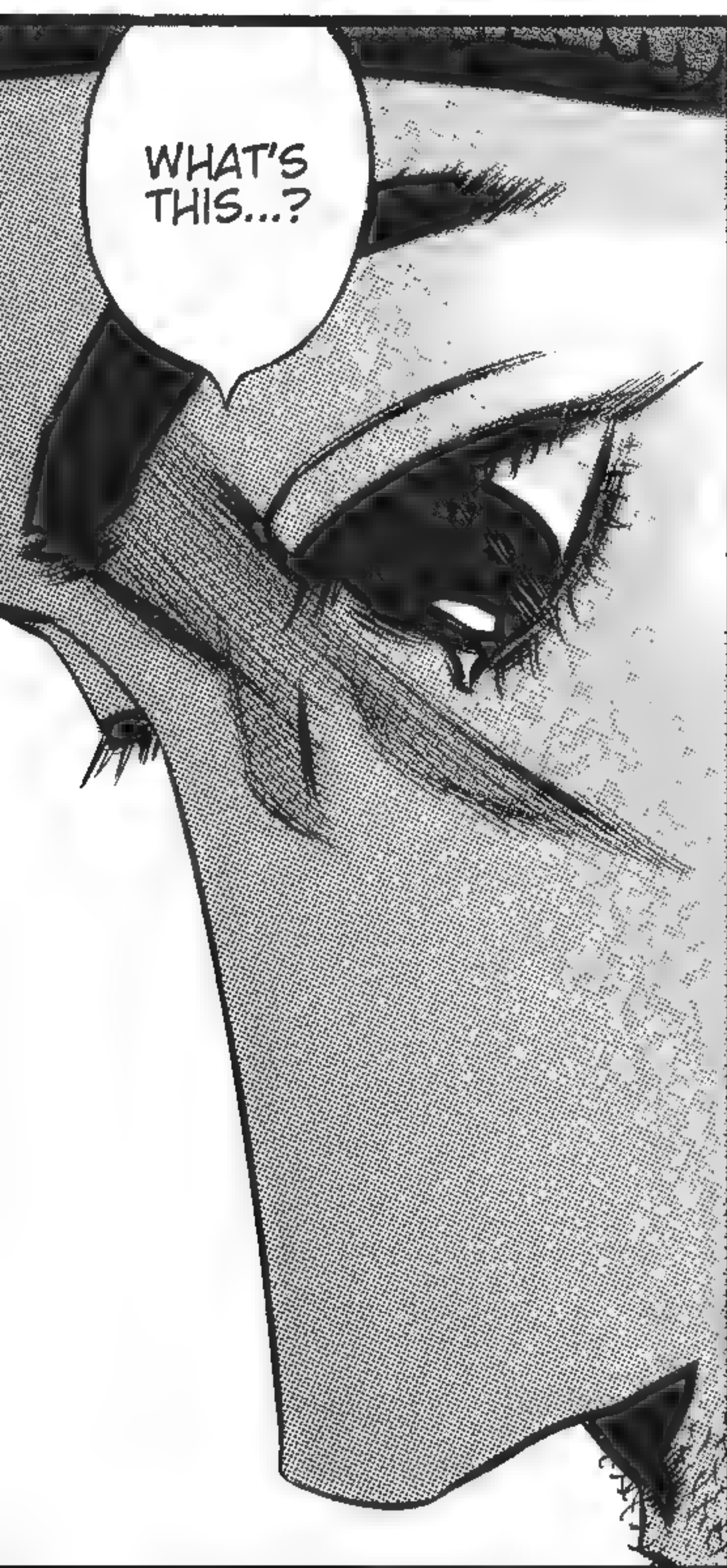
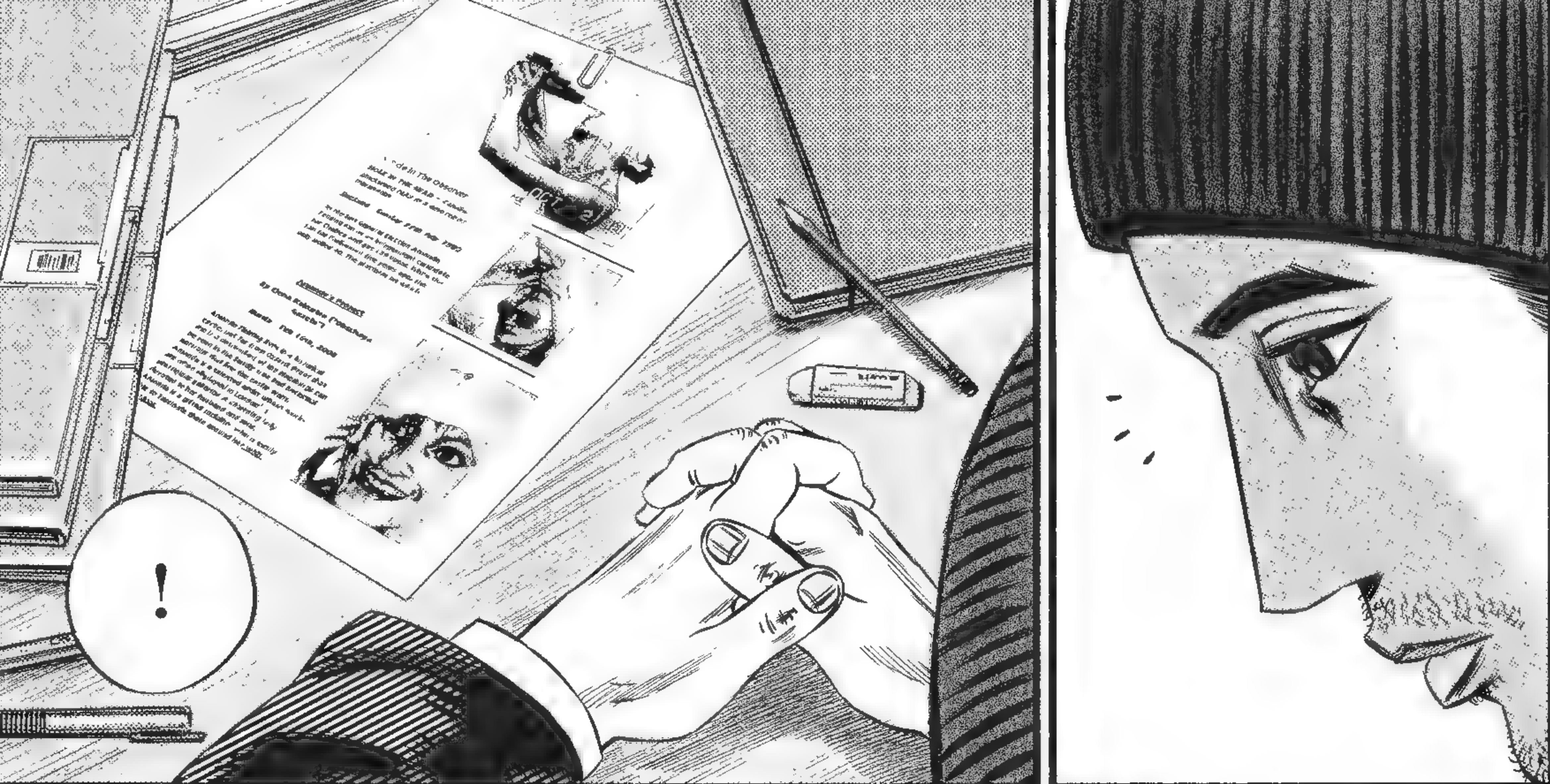
BUT SHE  
WASN'T SPECIAL.  
JUST ONE OF  
A HUNDRED  
GOLD DIGGERS  
I SCREWED  
AROUND WITH.

TO BE  
FRANK, SHE  
LEFT EVEN  
LESS OF AN  
IMPRESSION  
ON ME THAN  
MOST.

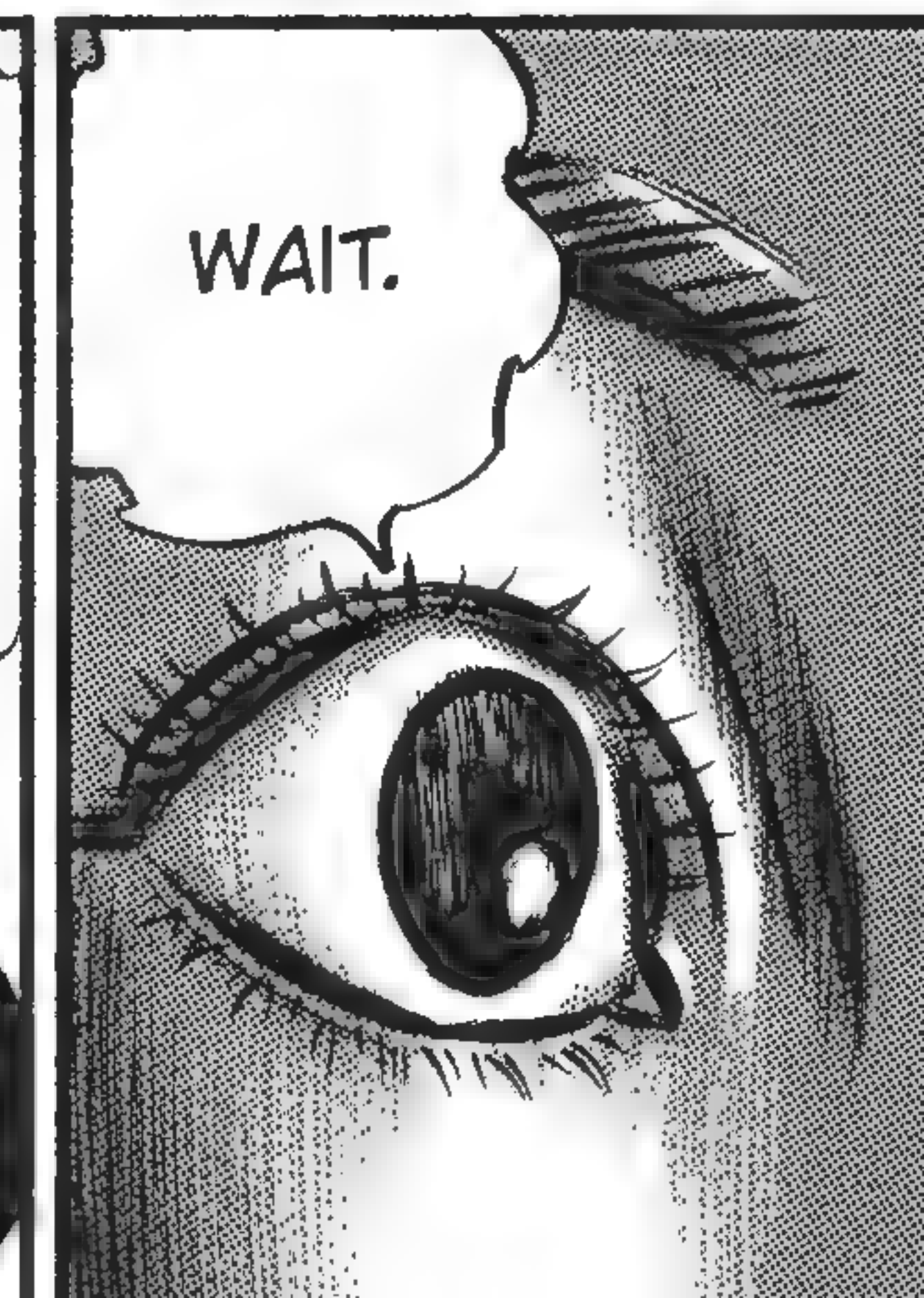
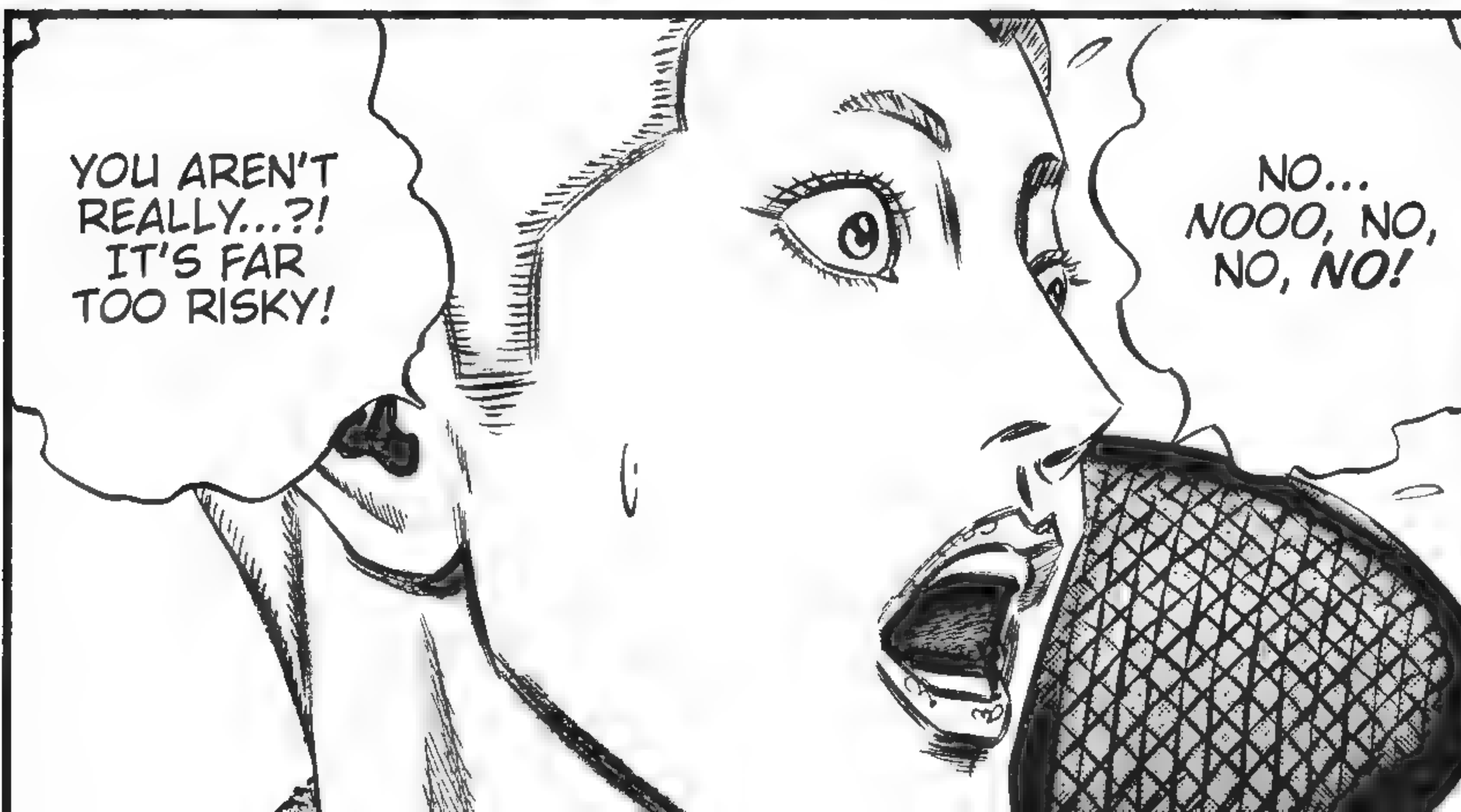










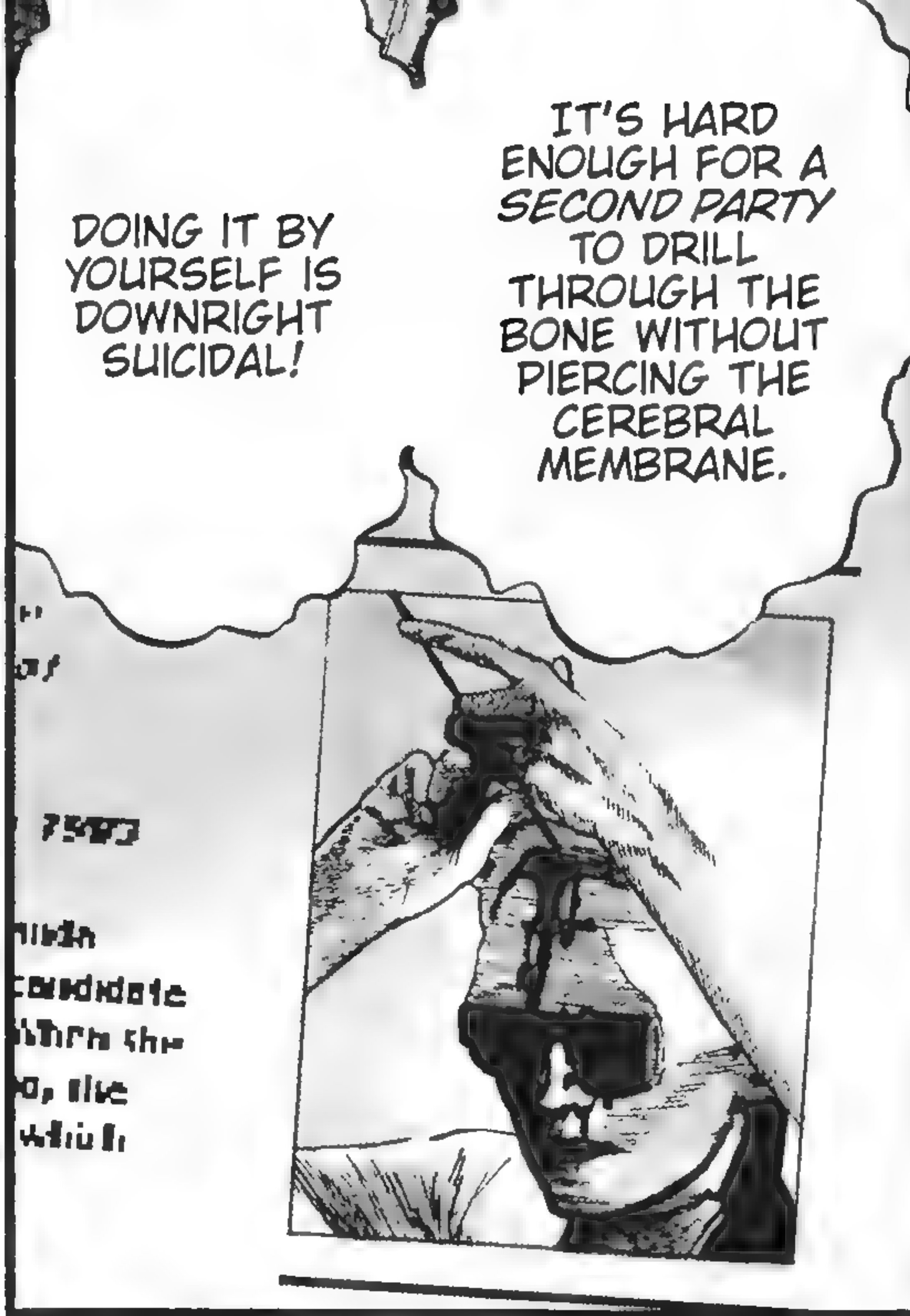






I'M NOT  
KIDDING,  
NAKOSHI-  
SAN!

PEOPLE HAVE  
LITERALLY  
DIED TRYING  
TO TREPAN  
THEMSELVES!



DOING IT BY  
YOURSELF IS  
DOWNRIGHT  
SUICIDAL!

IT'S HARD  
ENOUGH FOR A  
SECOND PARTY  
TO DRILL  
THROUGH THE  
BONE WITHOUT  
PIERCING THE  
CEREBRAL  
MEMBRANE.



GLANCE..

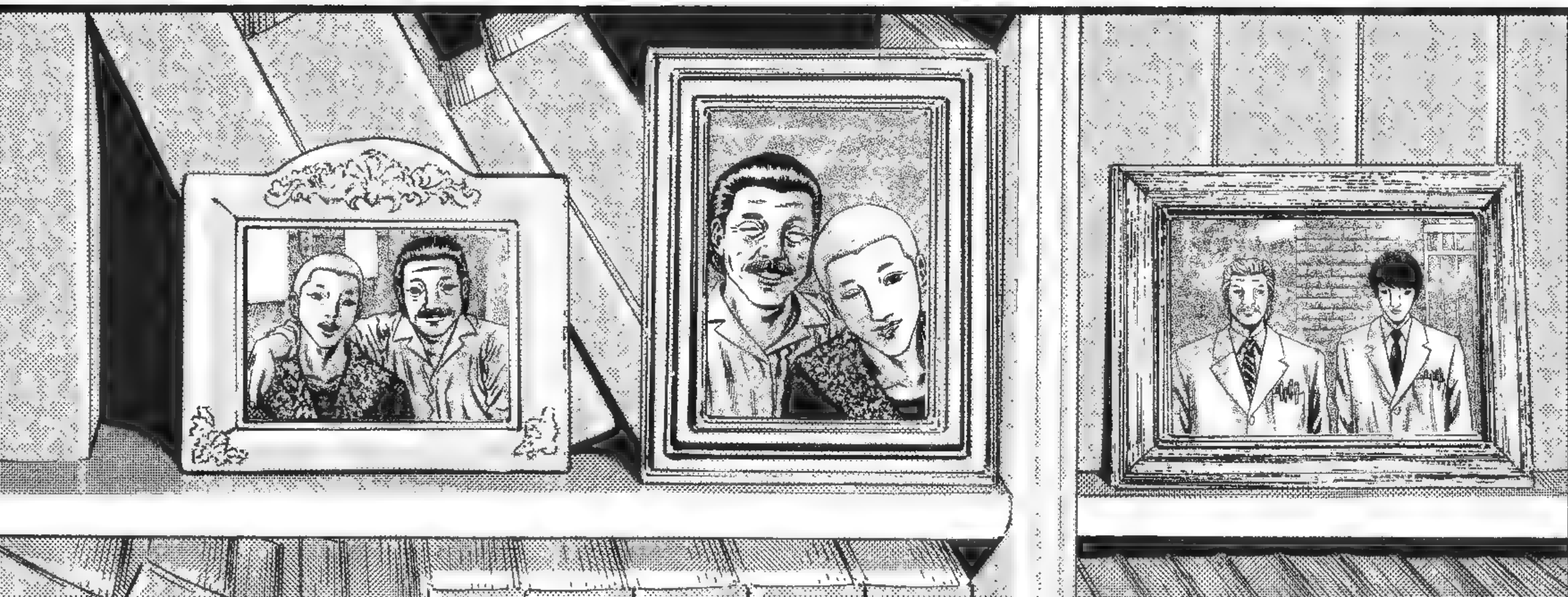


I'M NOT  
SERIOUSLY  
CONSIDER-  
ING IT,  
MORON.

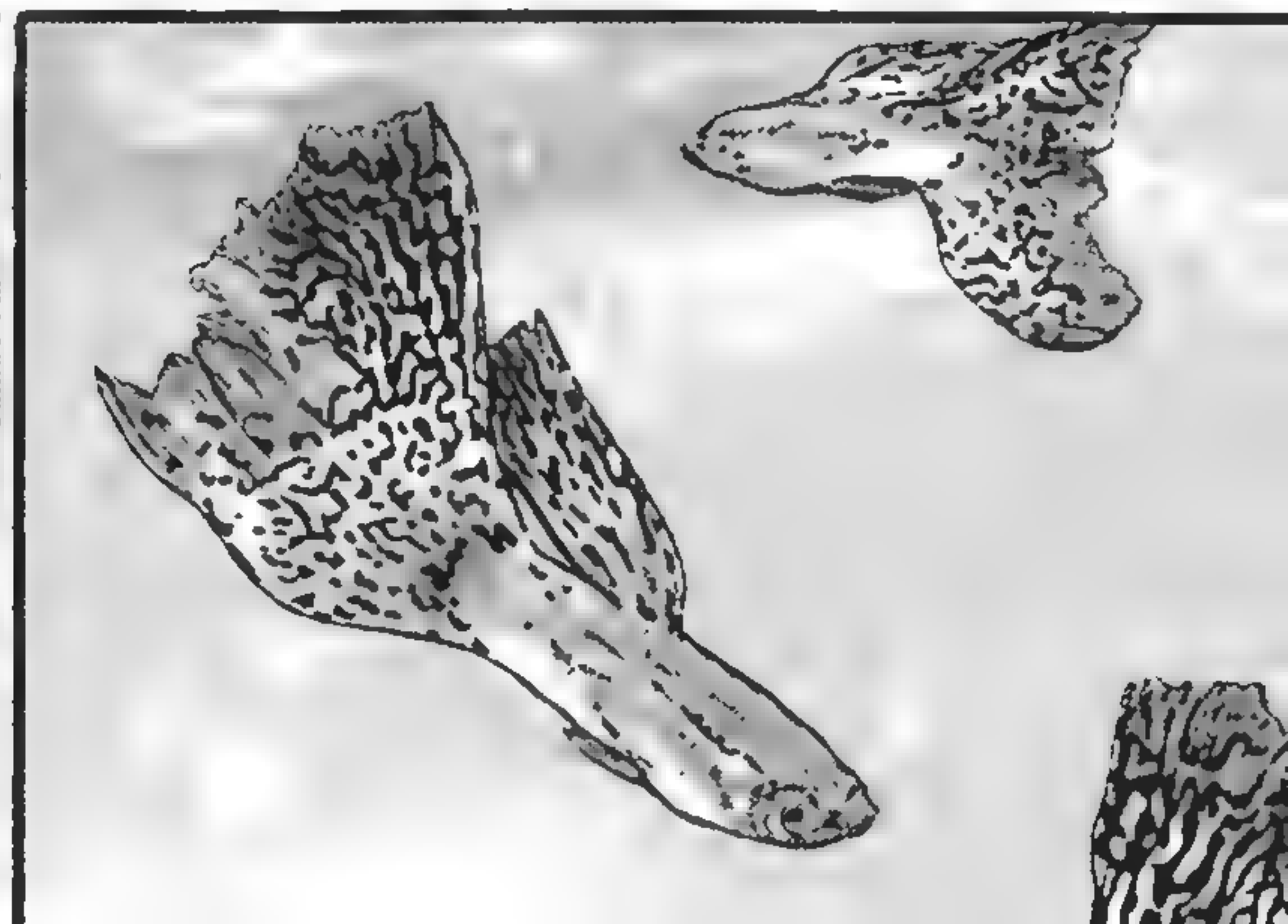
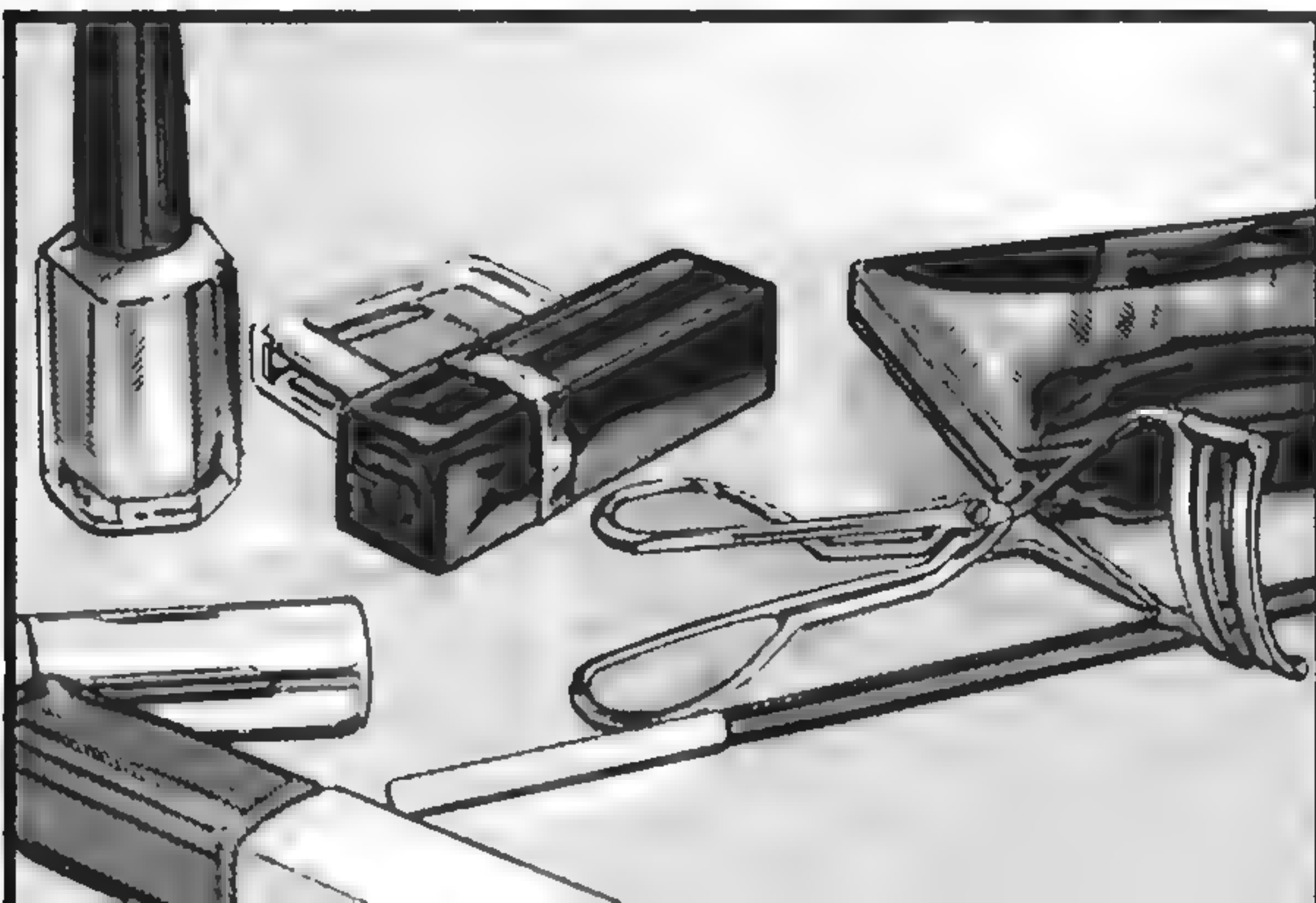
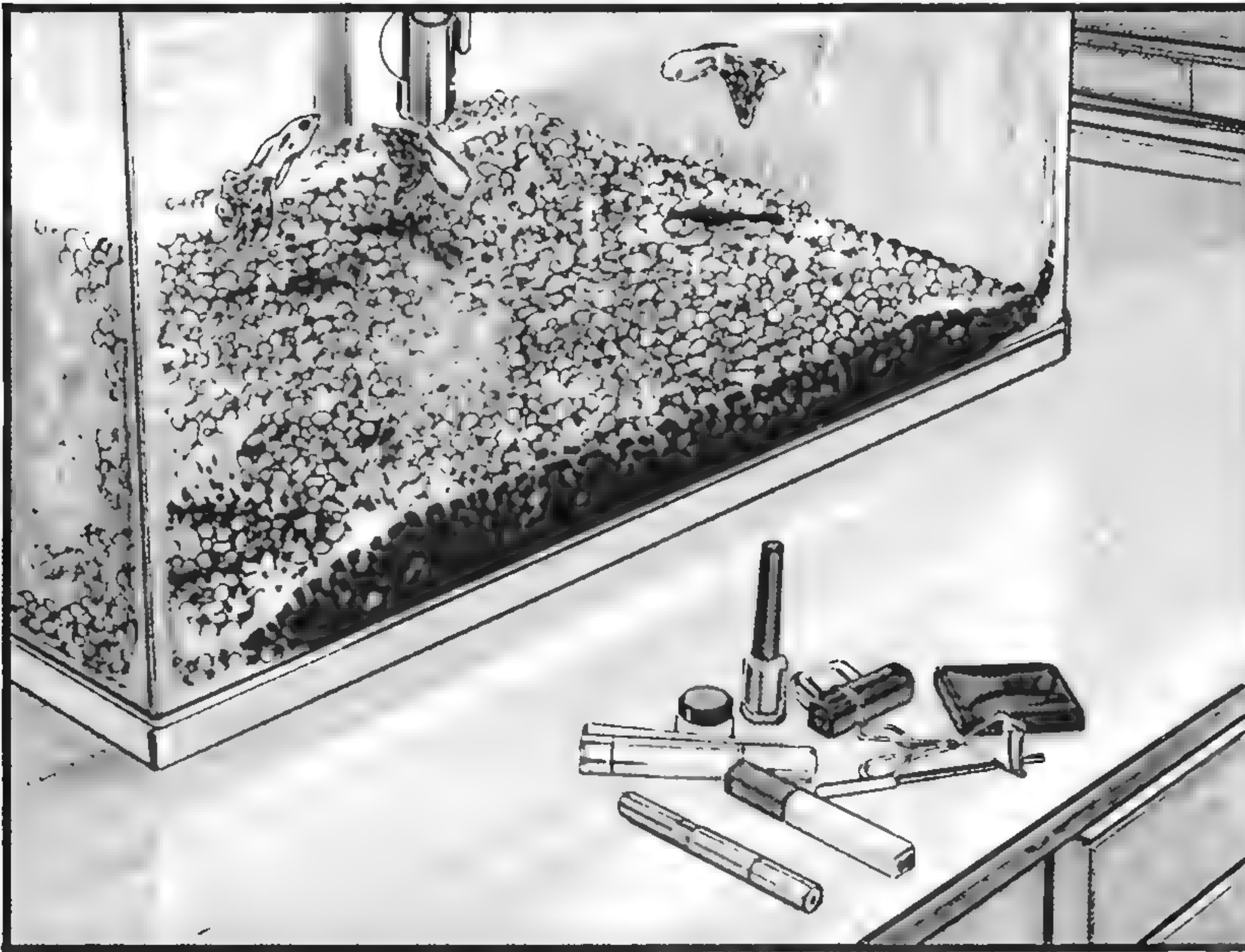




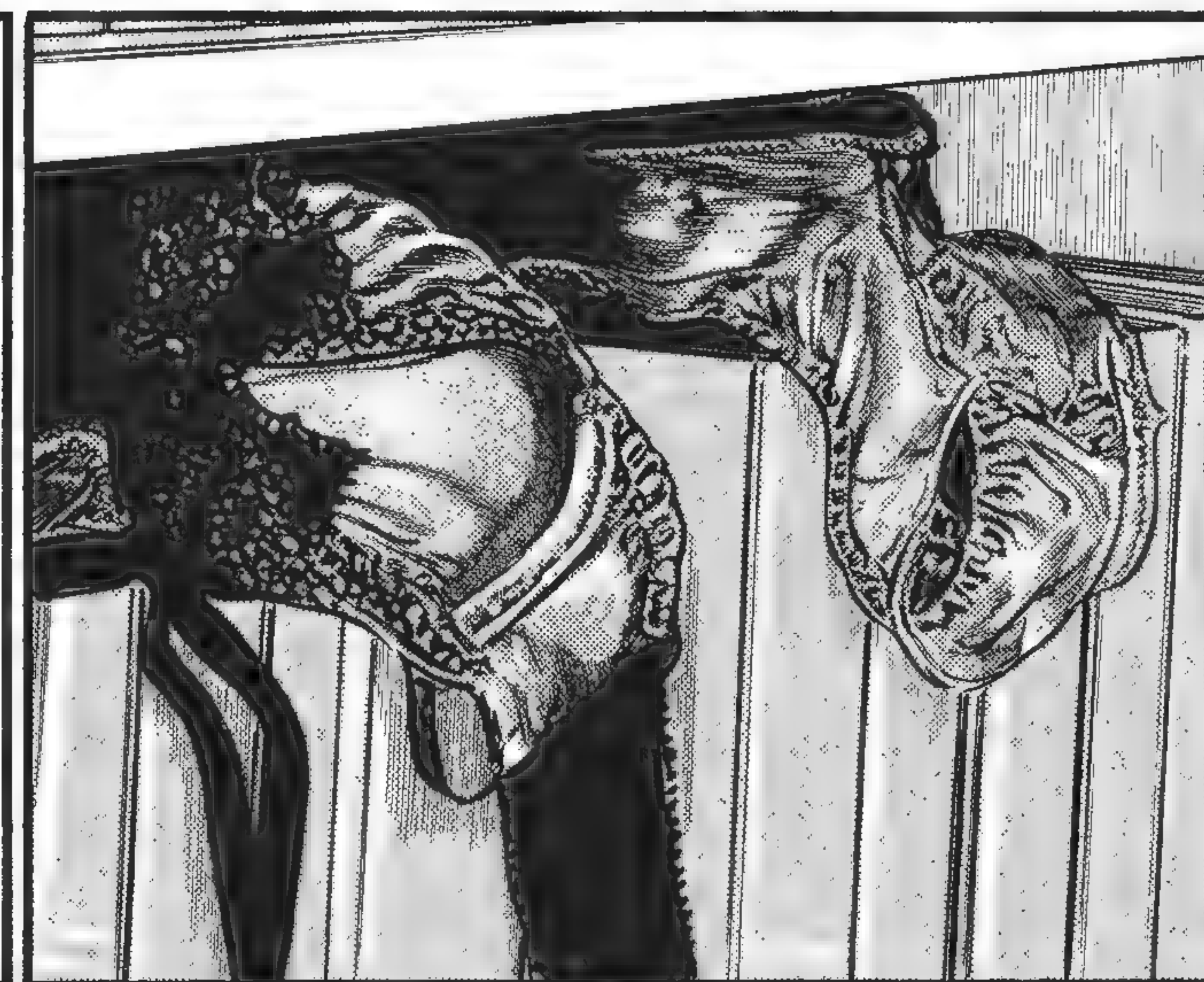












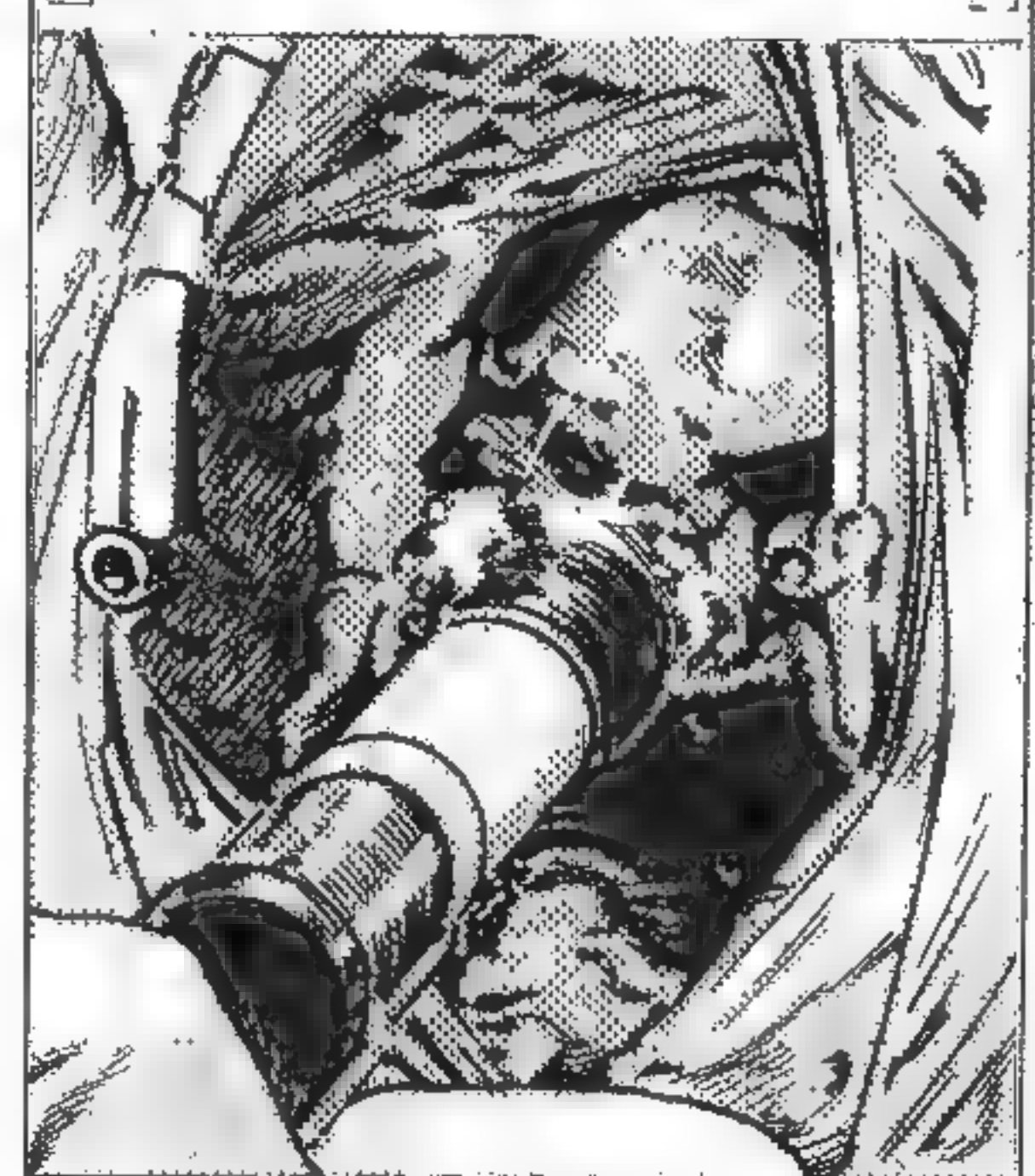
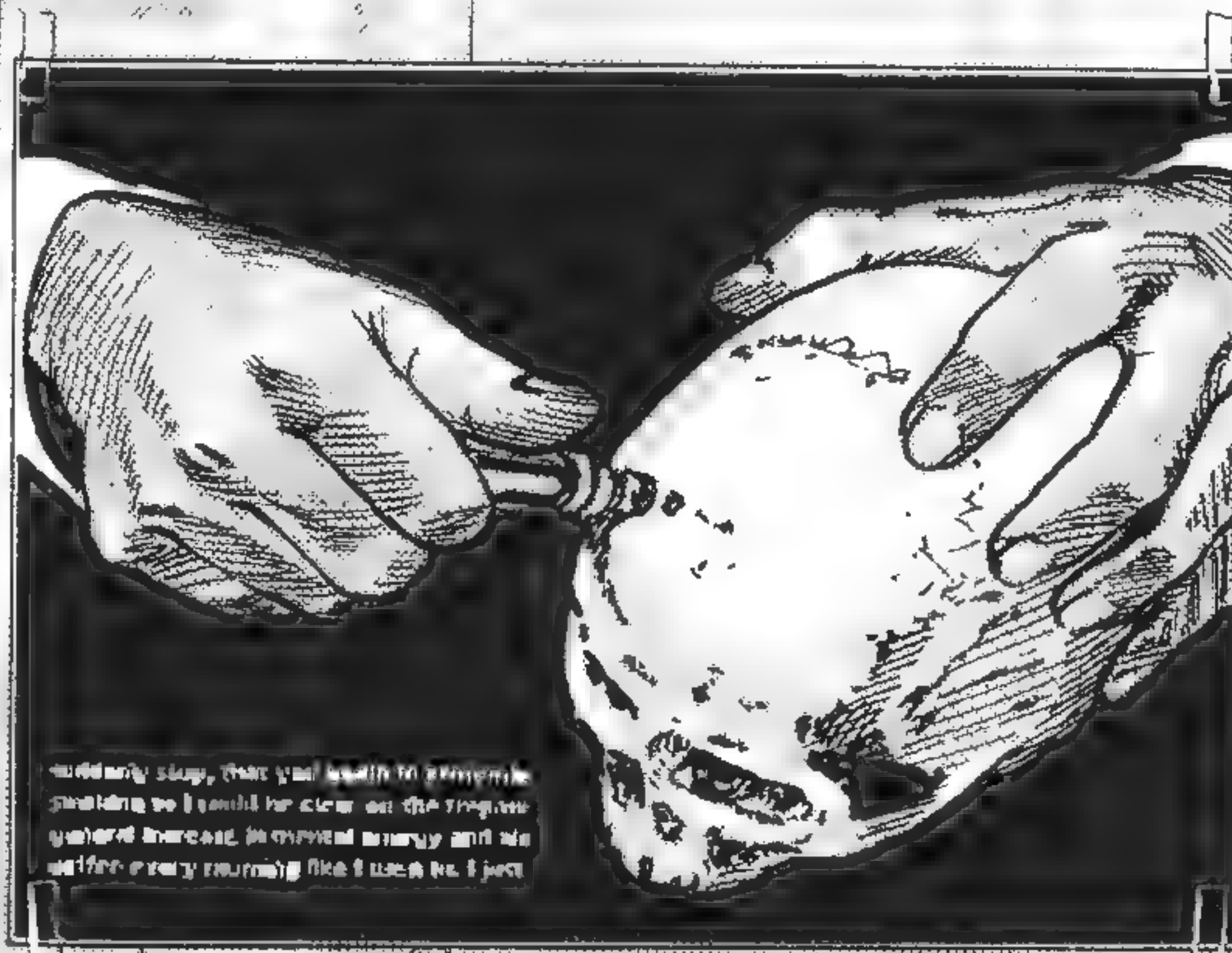






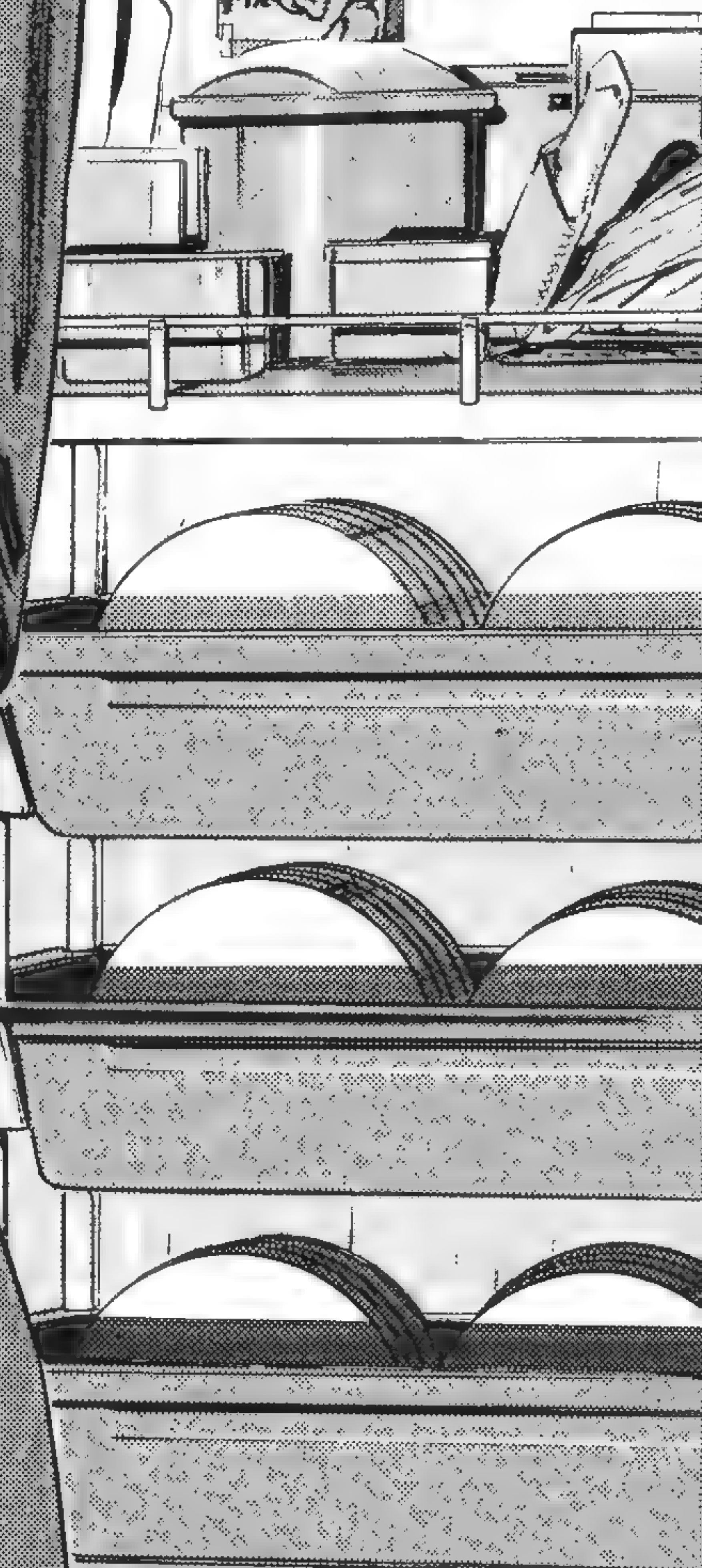
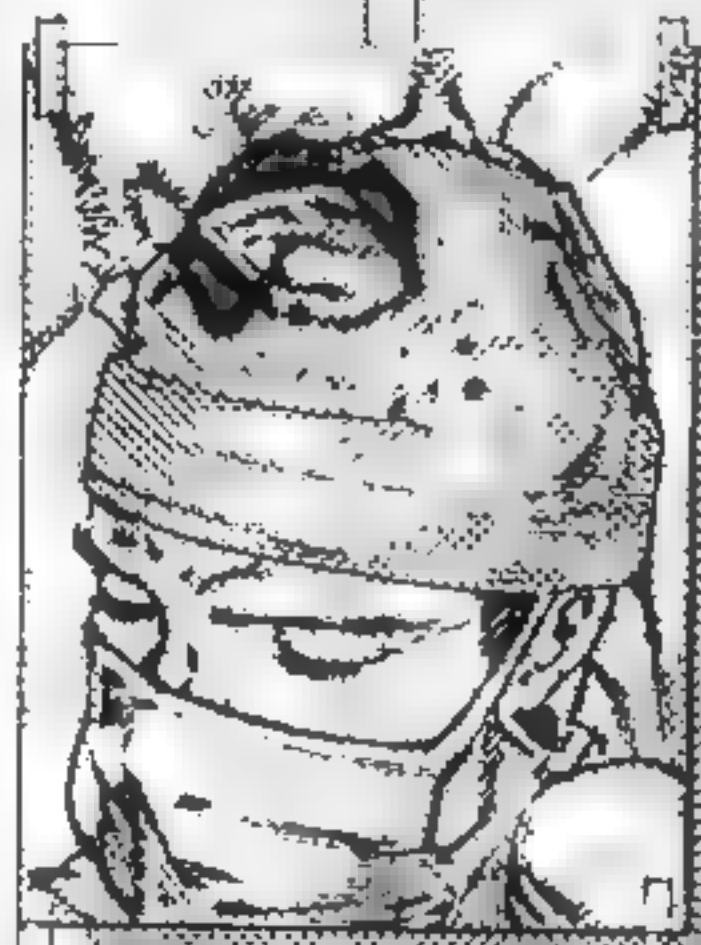


Medieval trephination from p. 26 in *The Body*, by Alan E. Nourse, NY: Time Incorporated, 1964.

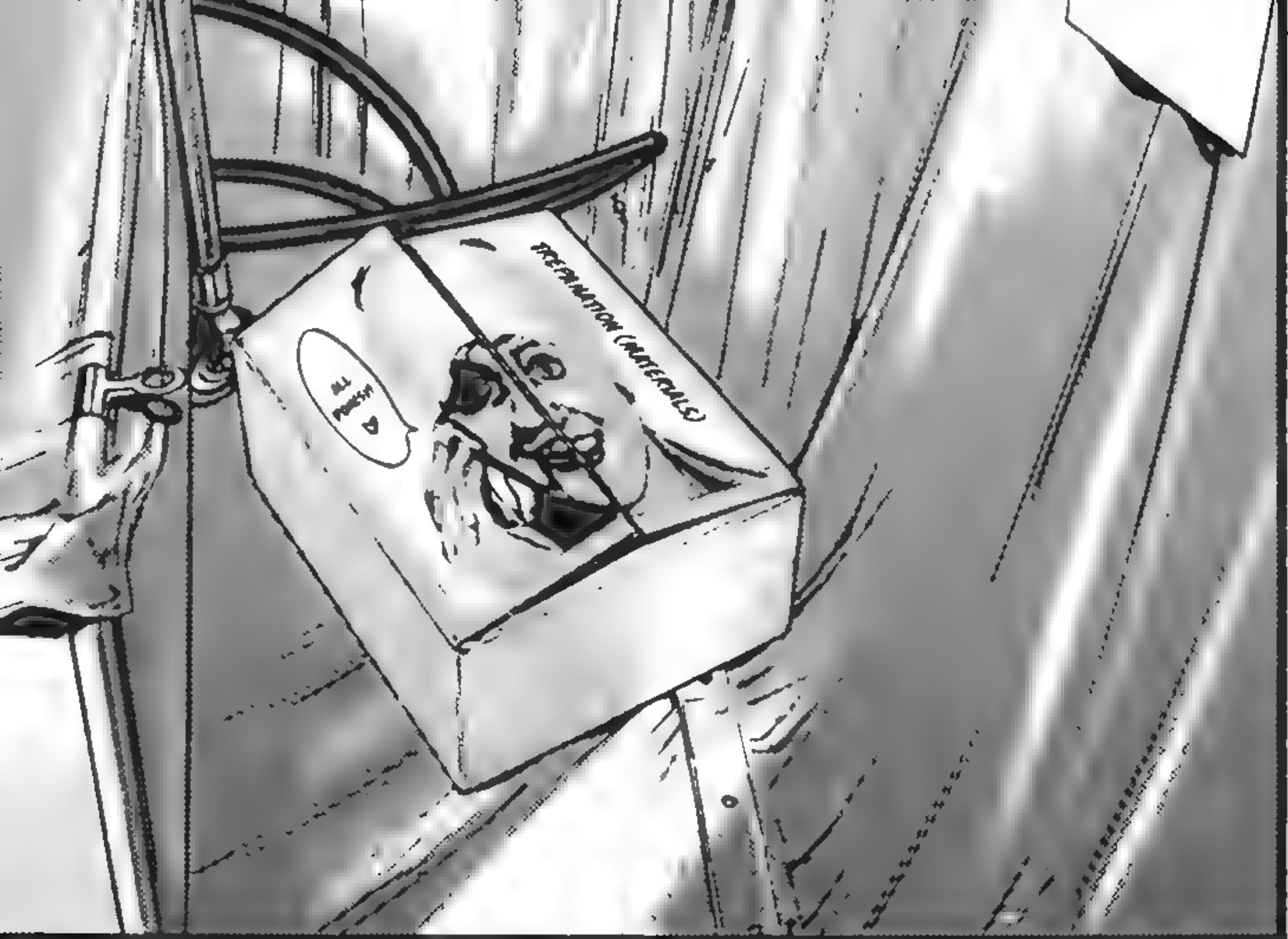


**TREPANATION**









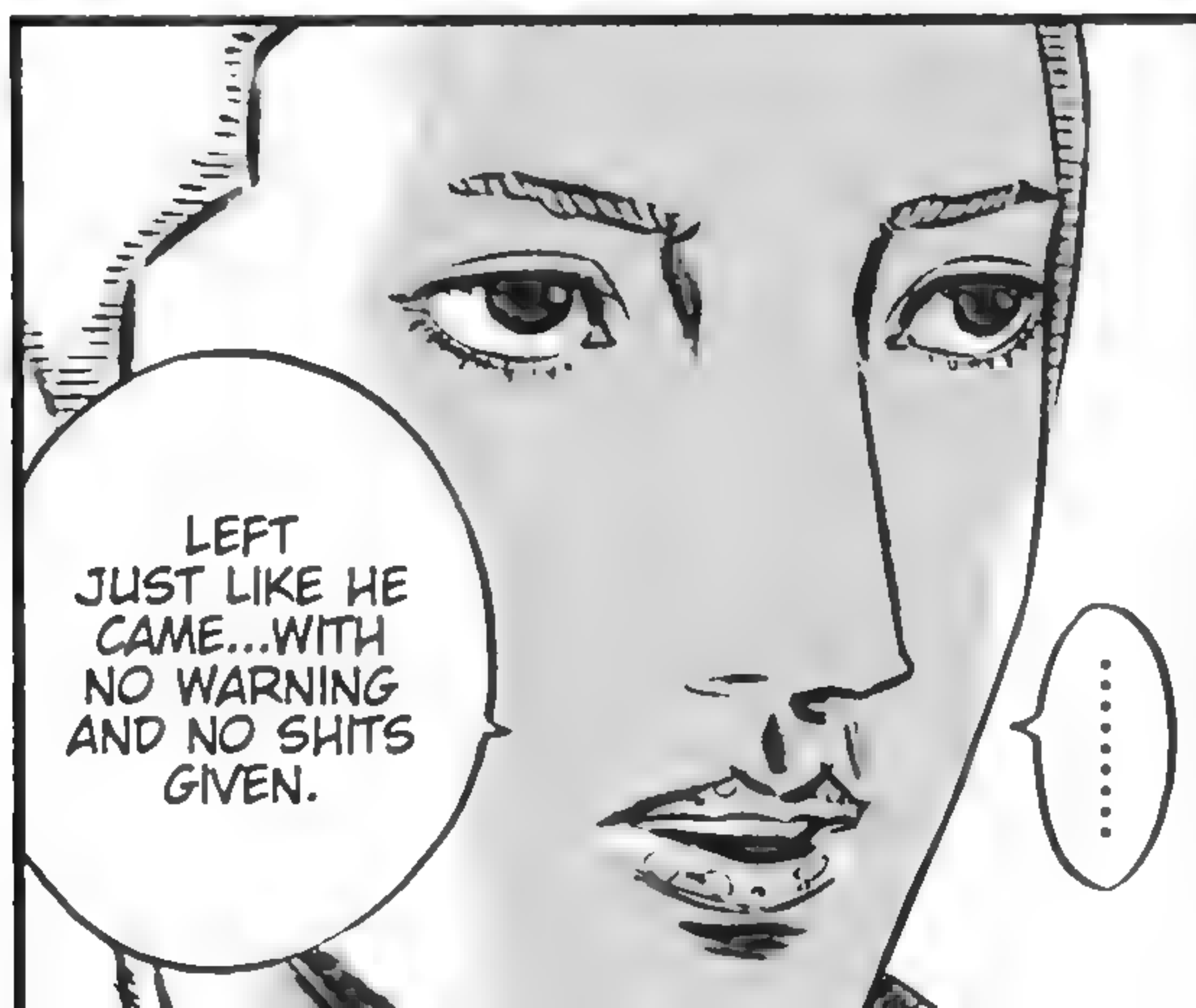




I'M  
BAAAACK!



!



LEFT  
JUST LIKE HE  
CAME...WITH  
NO WARNING  
AND NO SHITS  
GIVEN.



HUH...?









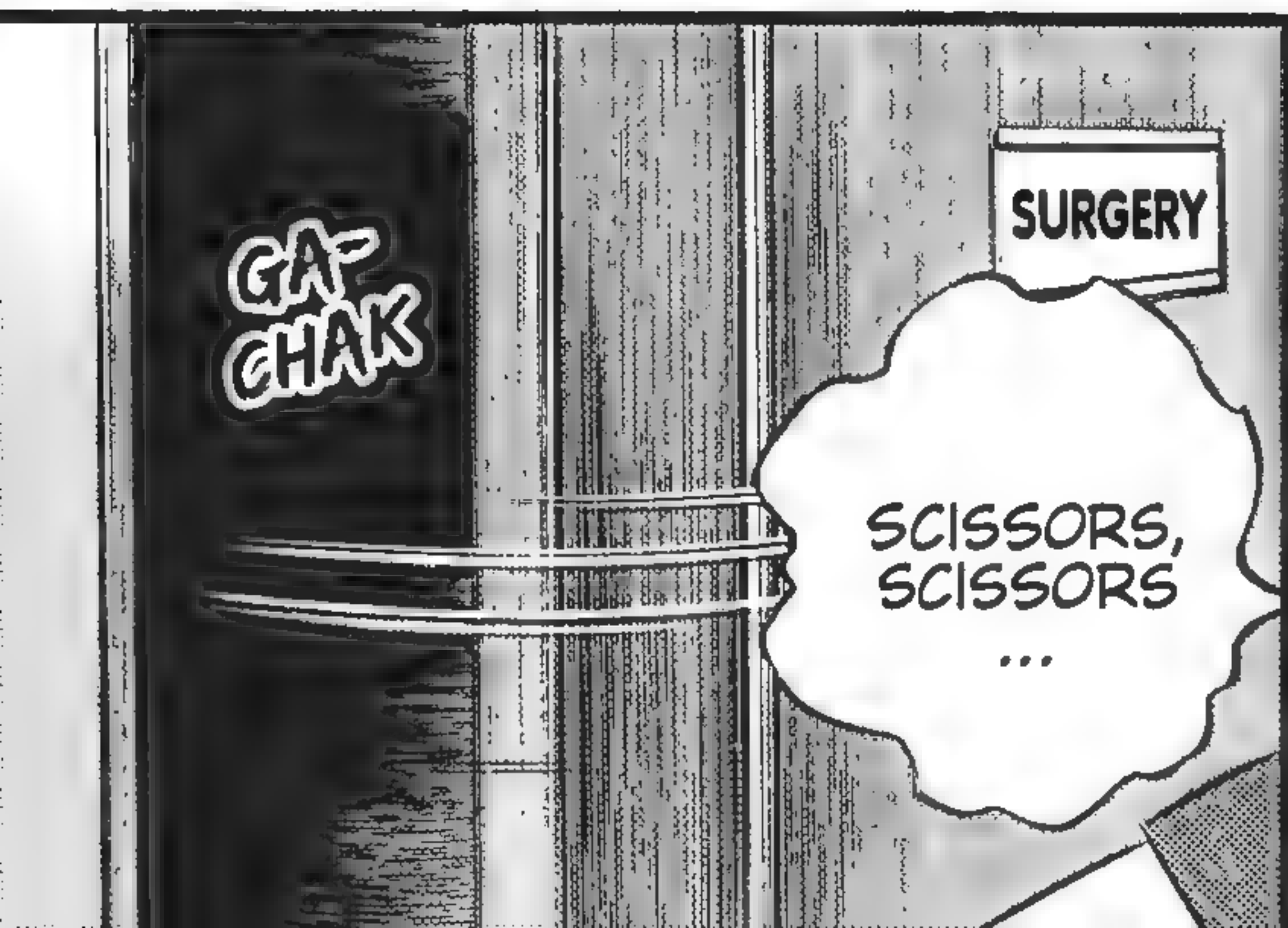
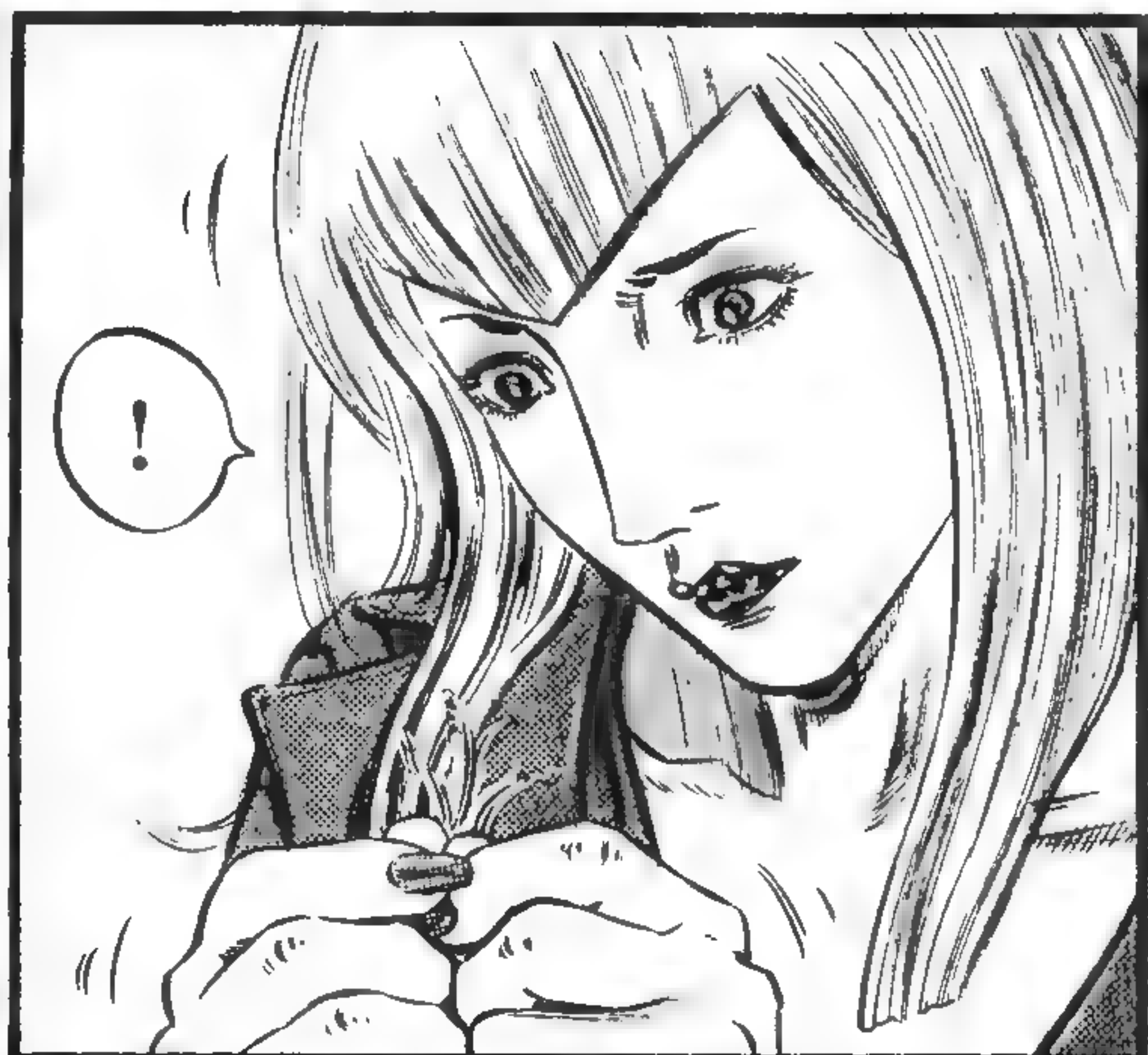
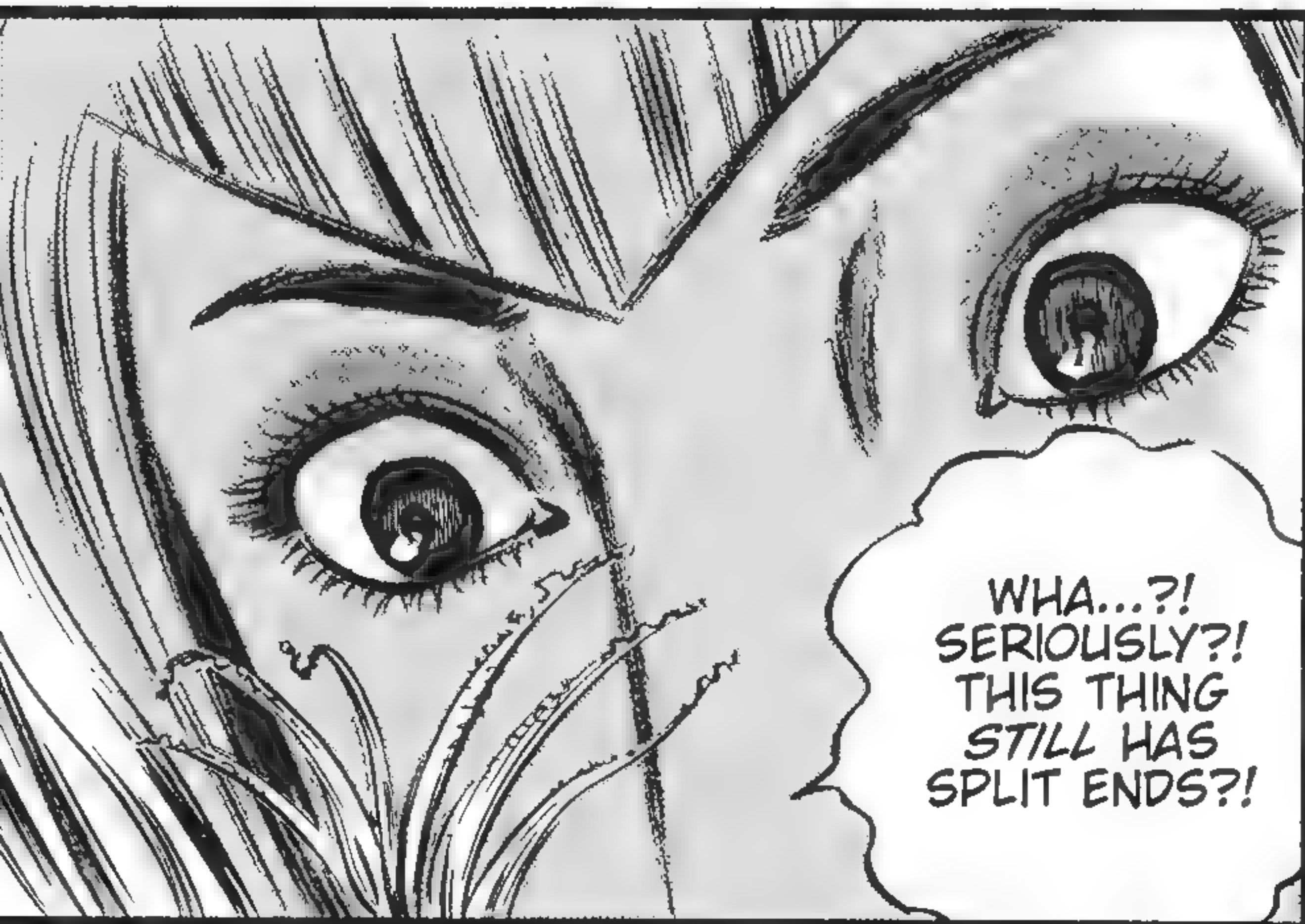
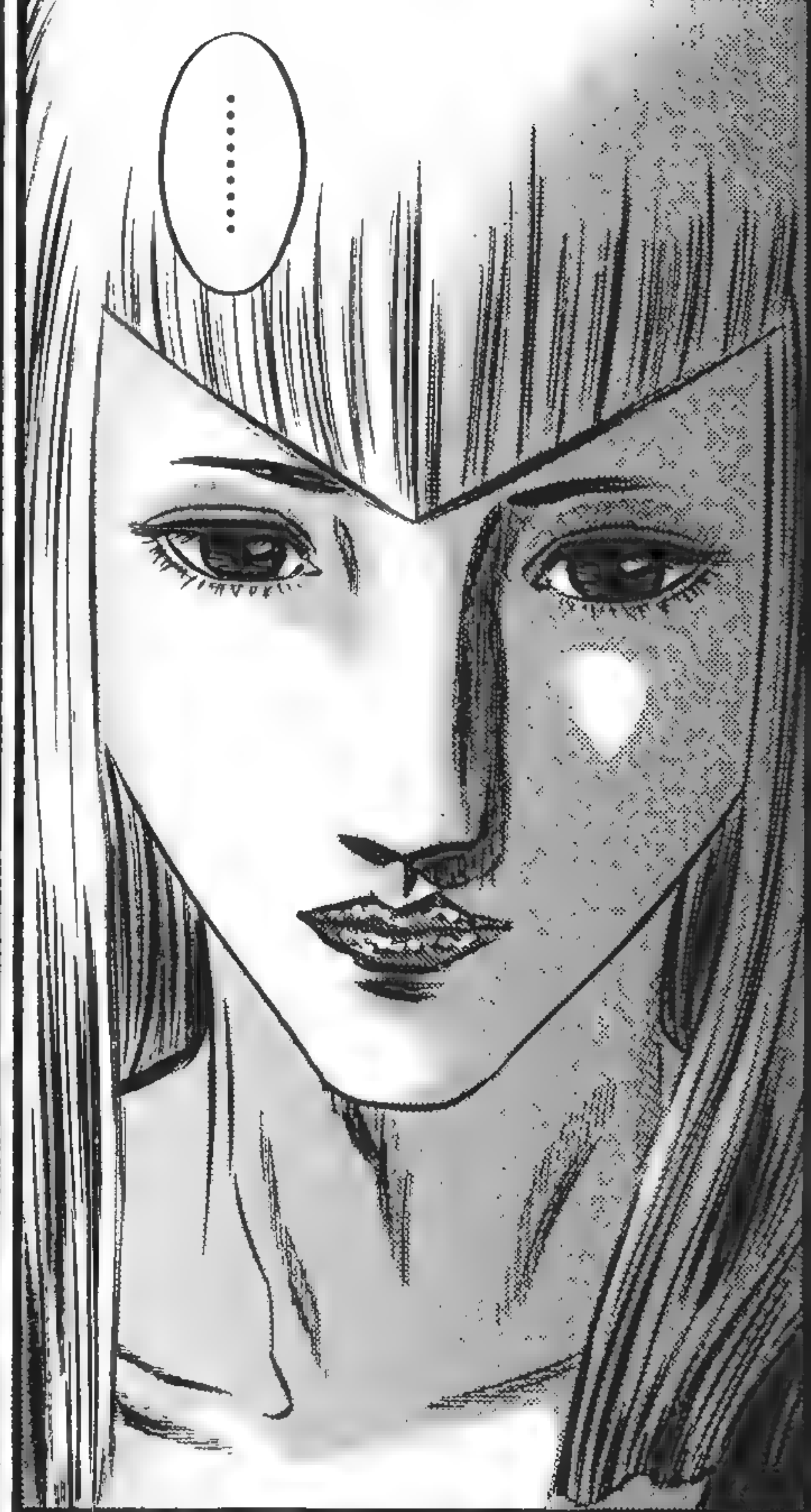












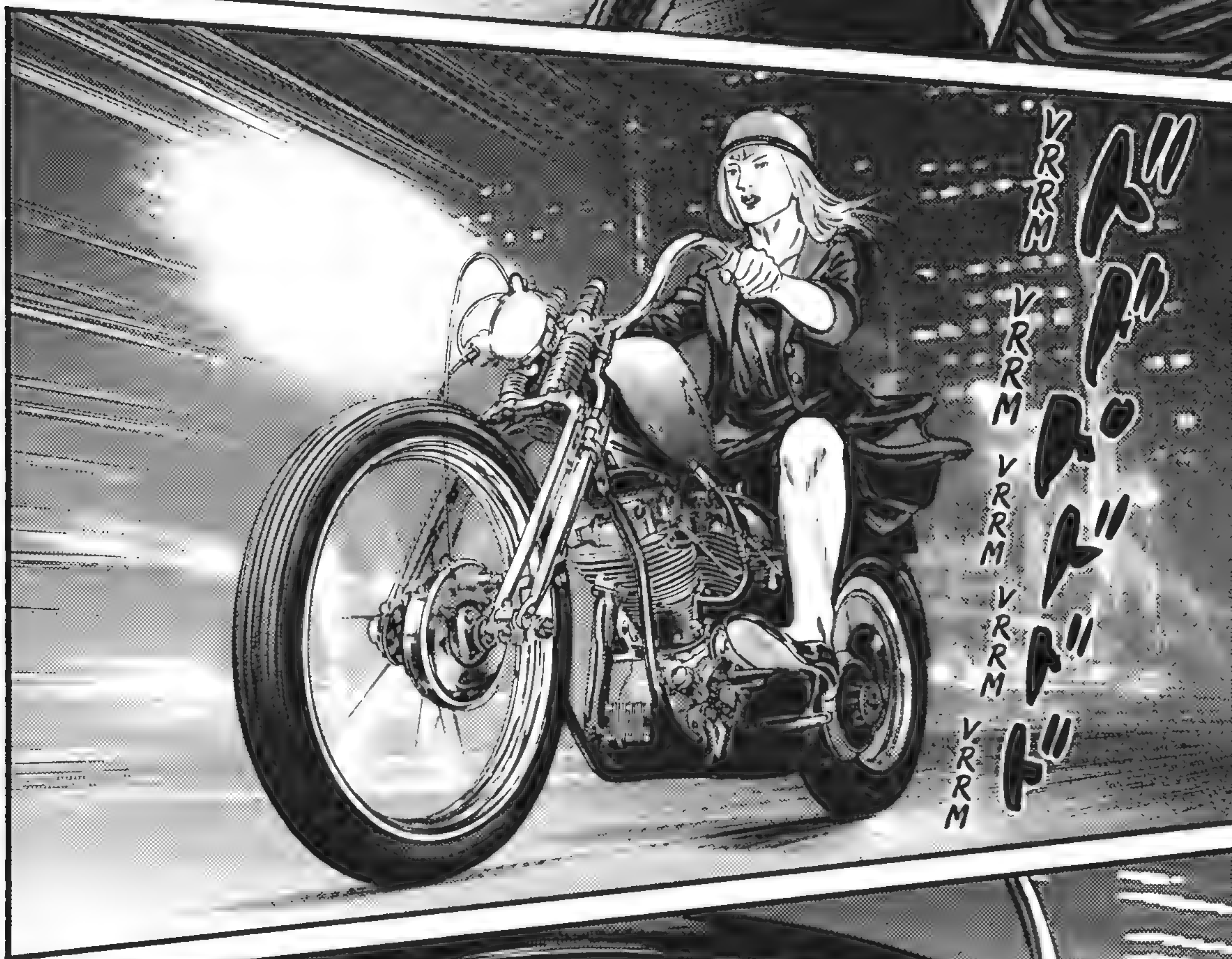
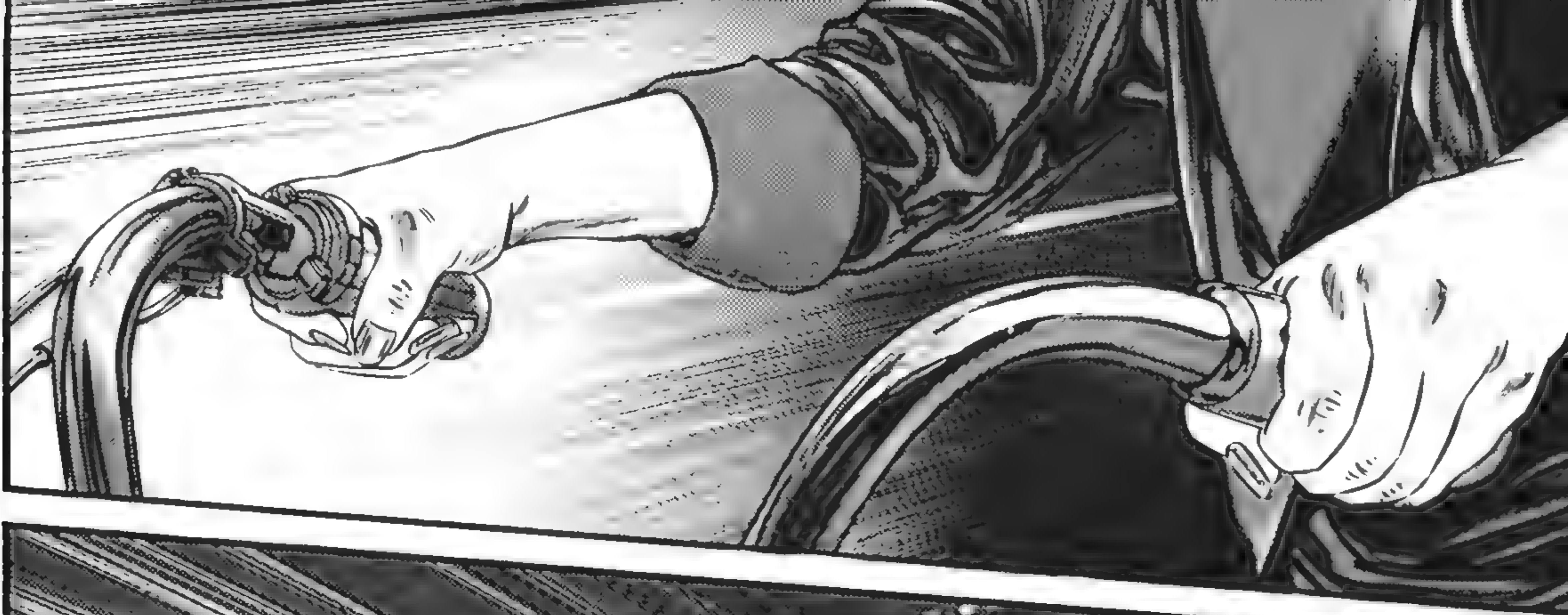






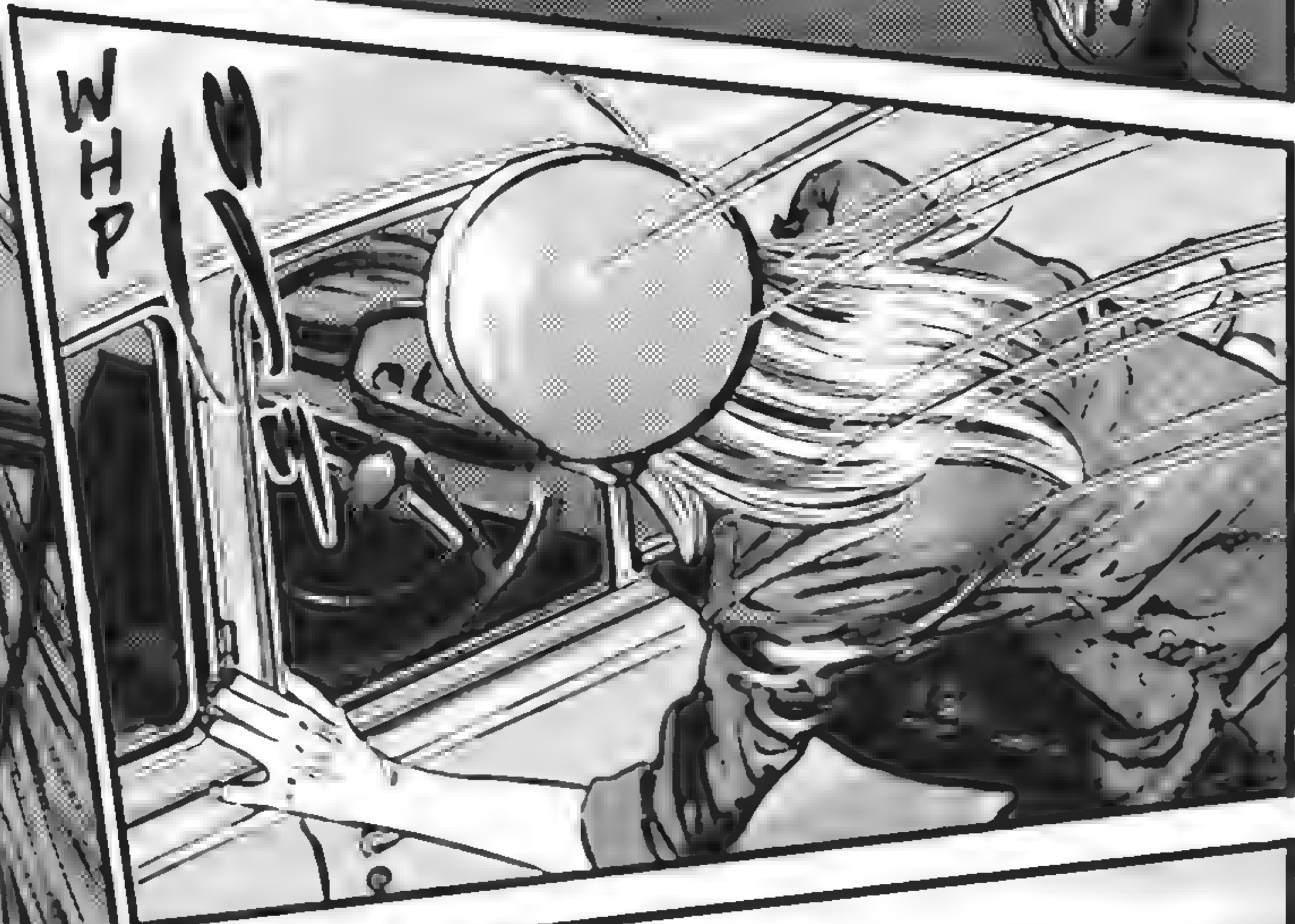
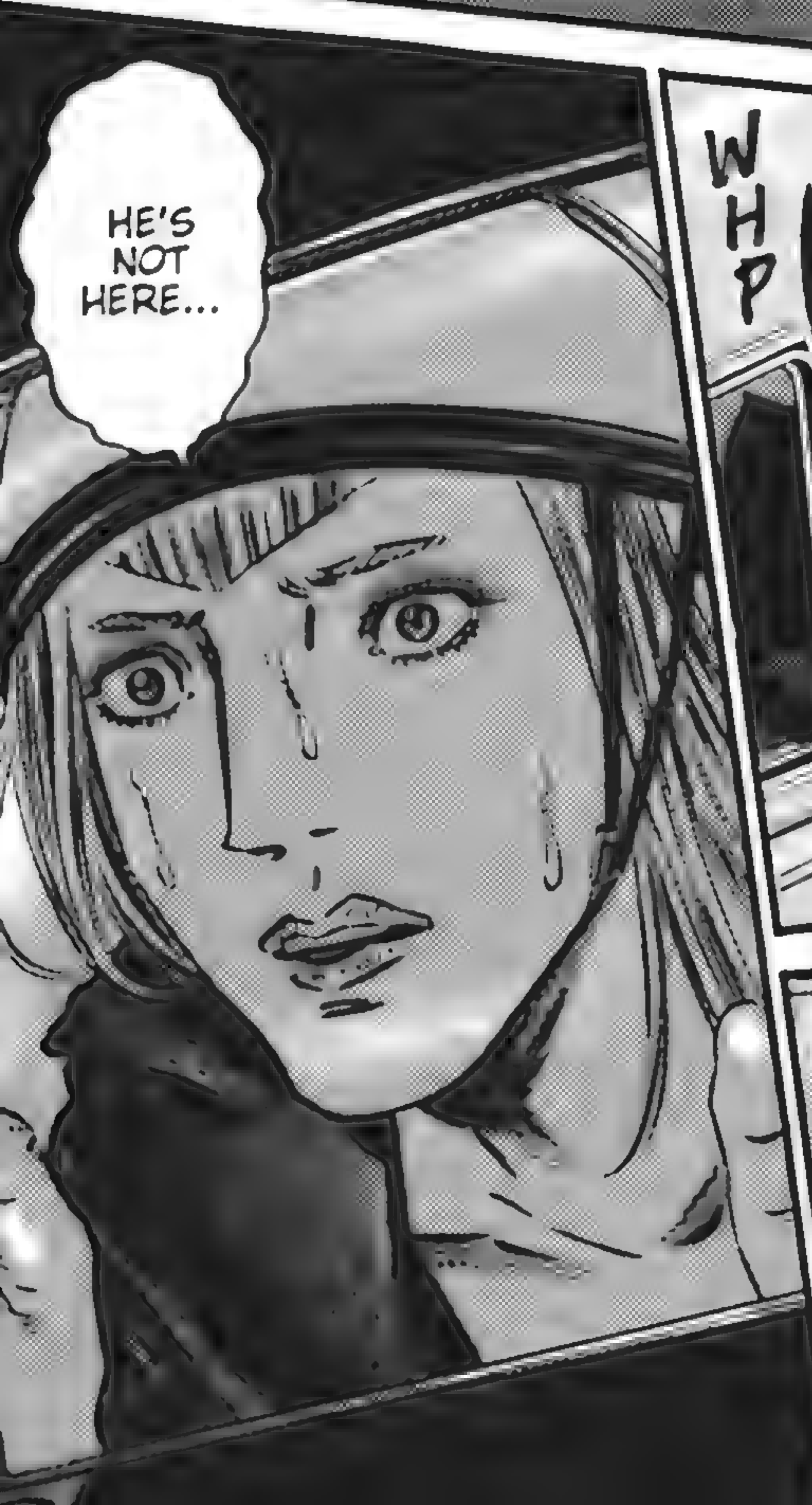






NAKOSHI-SAN...







NAKO-  
SHI-  
SAA-  
AAN!















FOR THE  
LOVE  
OF...

NAKOSHI-  
SAN...



WHAT'S  
WRONG?

WH...



IZZIS THAT  
"TRANS-  
GANDER"  
THING I  
HEARD  
'BOUT?

LOOKS  
LIKE IT.

DRAG  
QUEEN,  
HUH?

DAMN GOOD  
'UN, TOO. SHE'S  
CLITE. WITH A  
WIG, I PROLLY  
COULDN'T  
TELL.

MURMUR

MURMUR

MURMUR





I KNOW,  
I'M  
SORRY.

HOW DARE  
YOU TAKE ALL  
MY MATERIALS  
ON TREPANA-  
TION WITHOUT  
ASKING!



GLARE  
...



SO CAN I  
BORROW THEM,  
PLEASE? JUST  
FOR A BIT?



I JUST WANTED  
TO STUDY THEM.  
GET MY THOUGHTS  
IN ORDER, YOU  
KNOW?



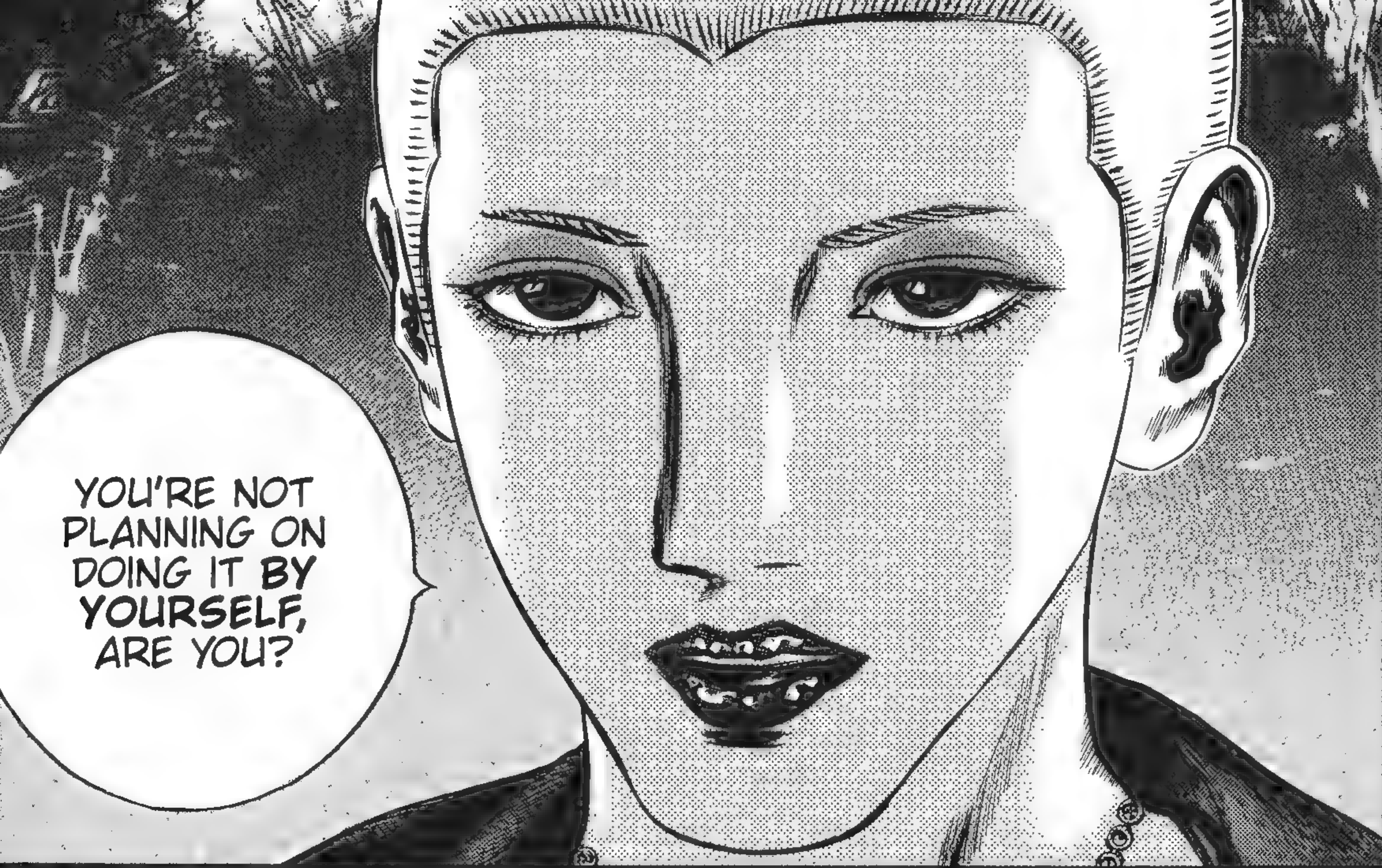
WHAT  
DO YOU  
MEAN?



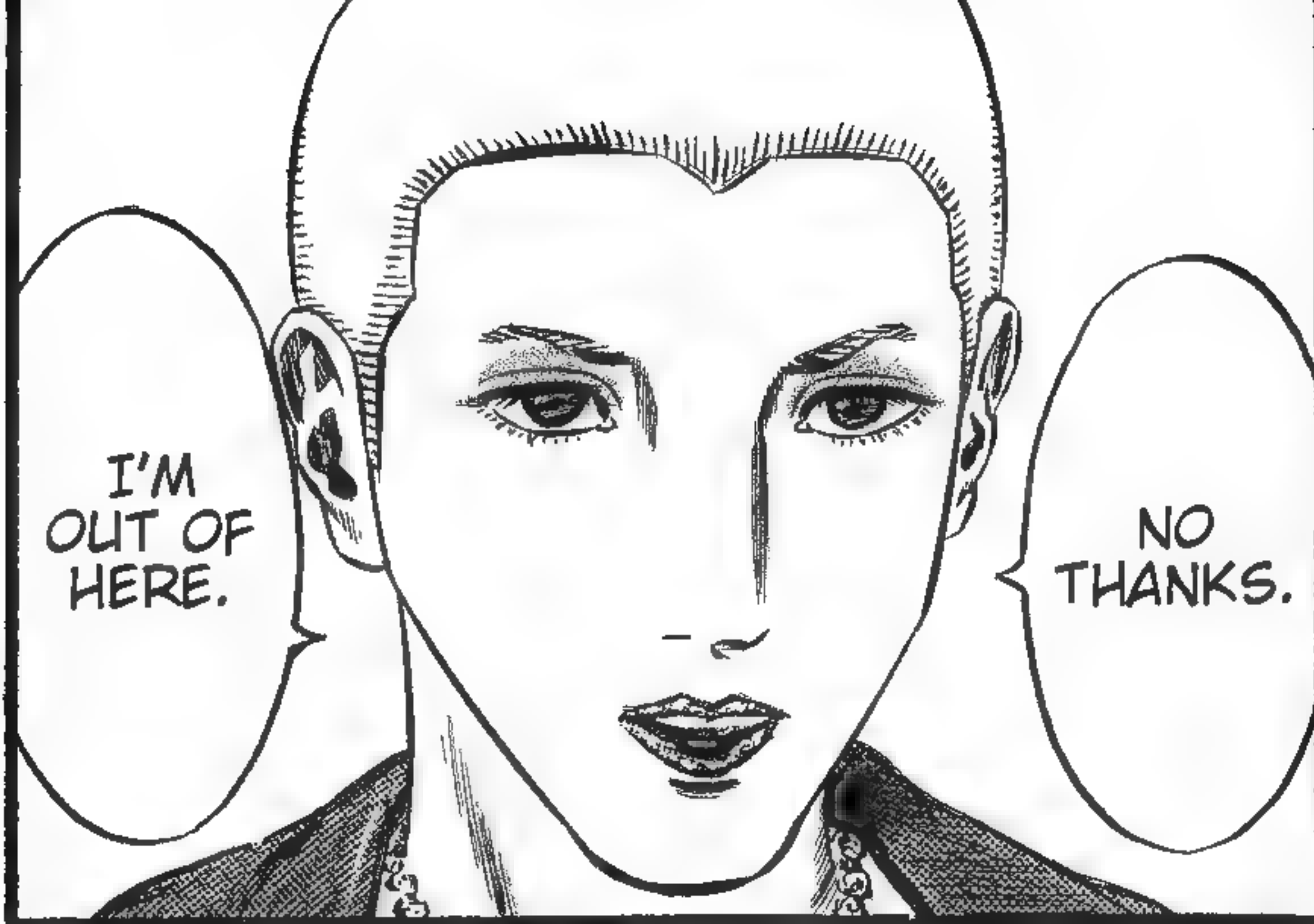
AND THAT'S  
THE ONLY  
REASON  
YOU WANT  
THEM?

?

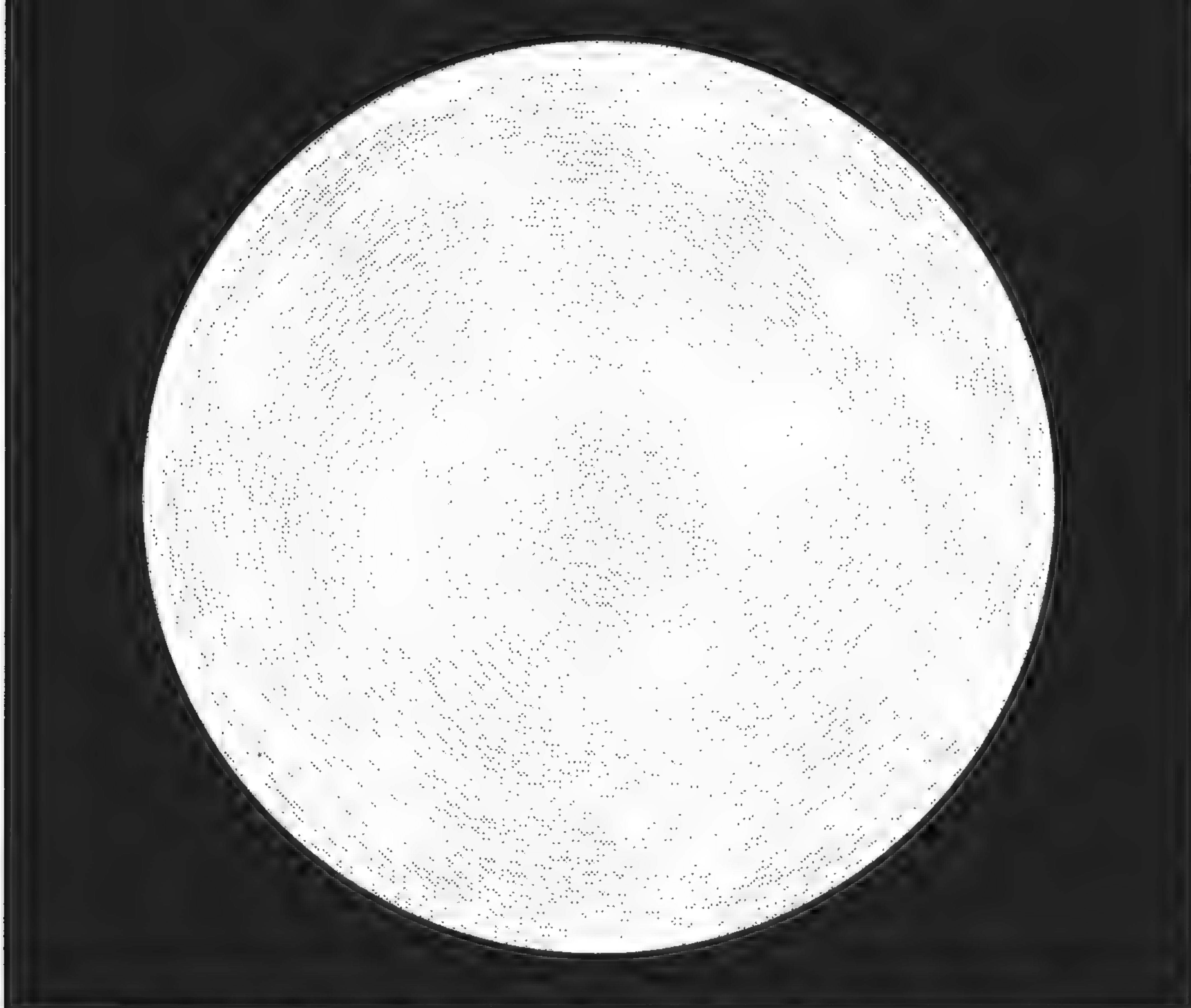




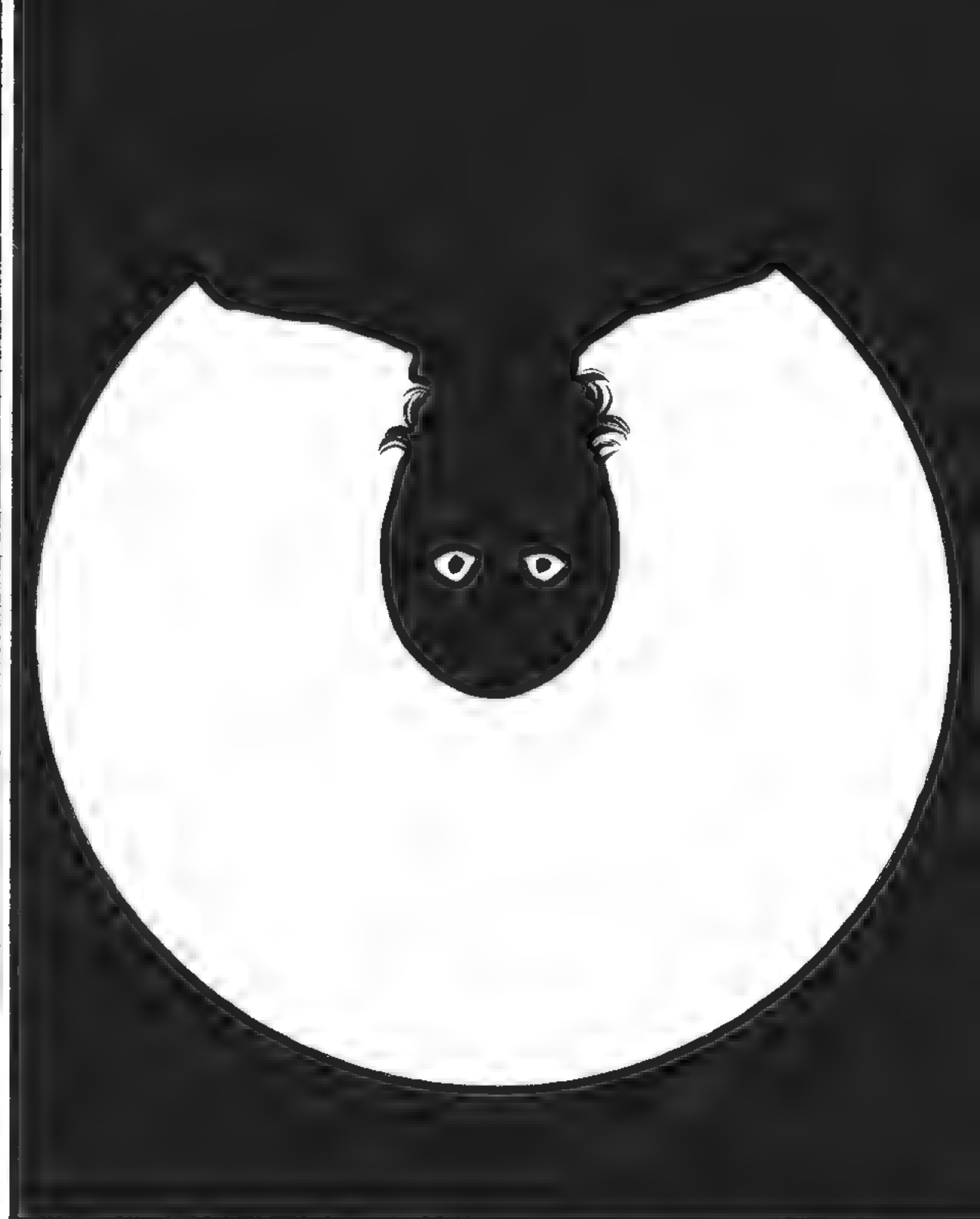




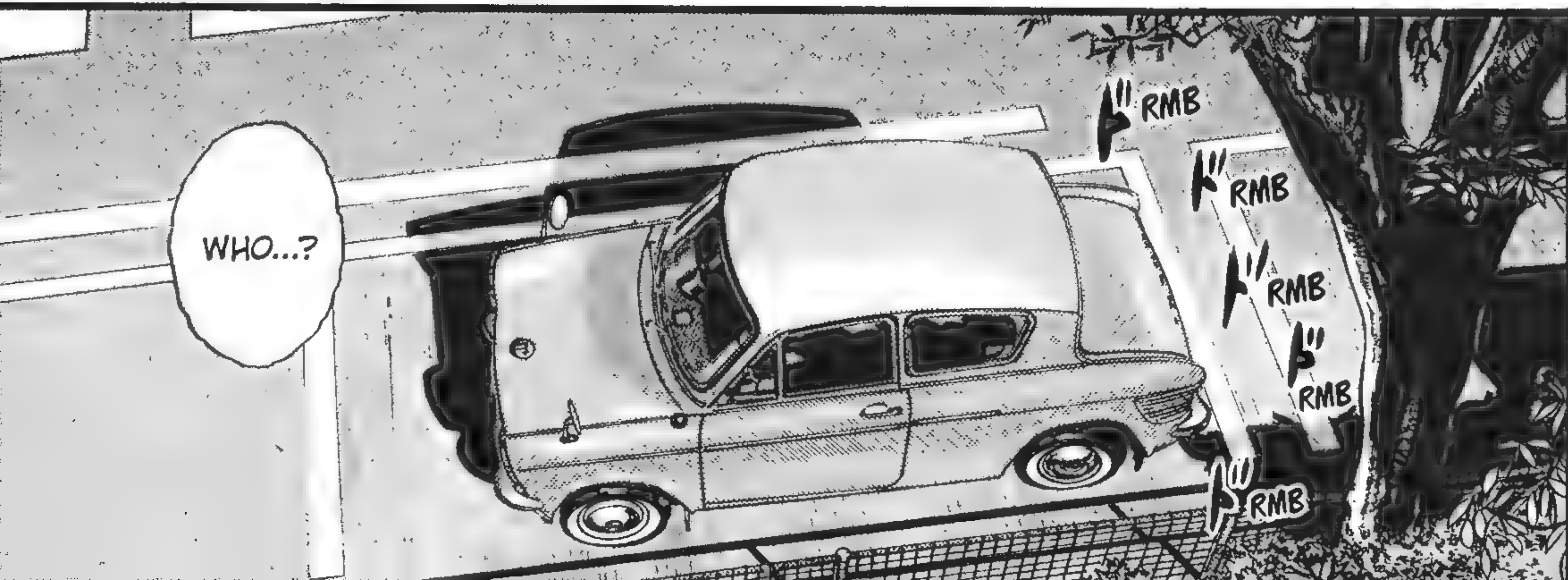
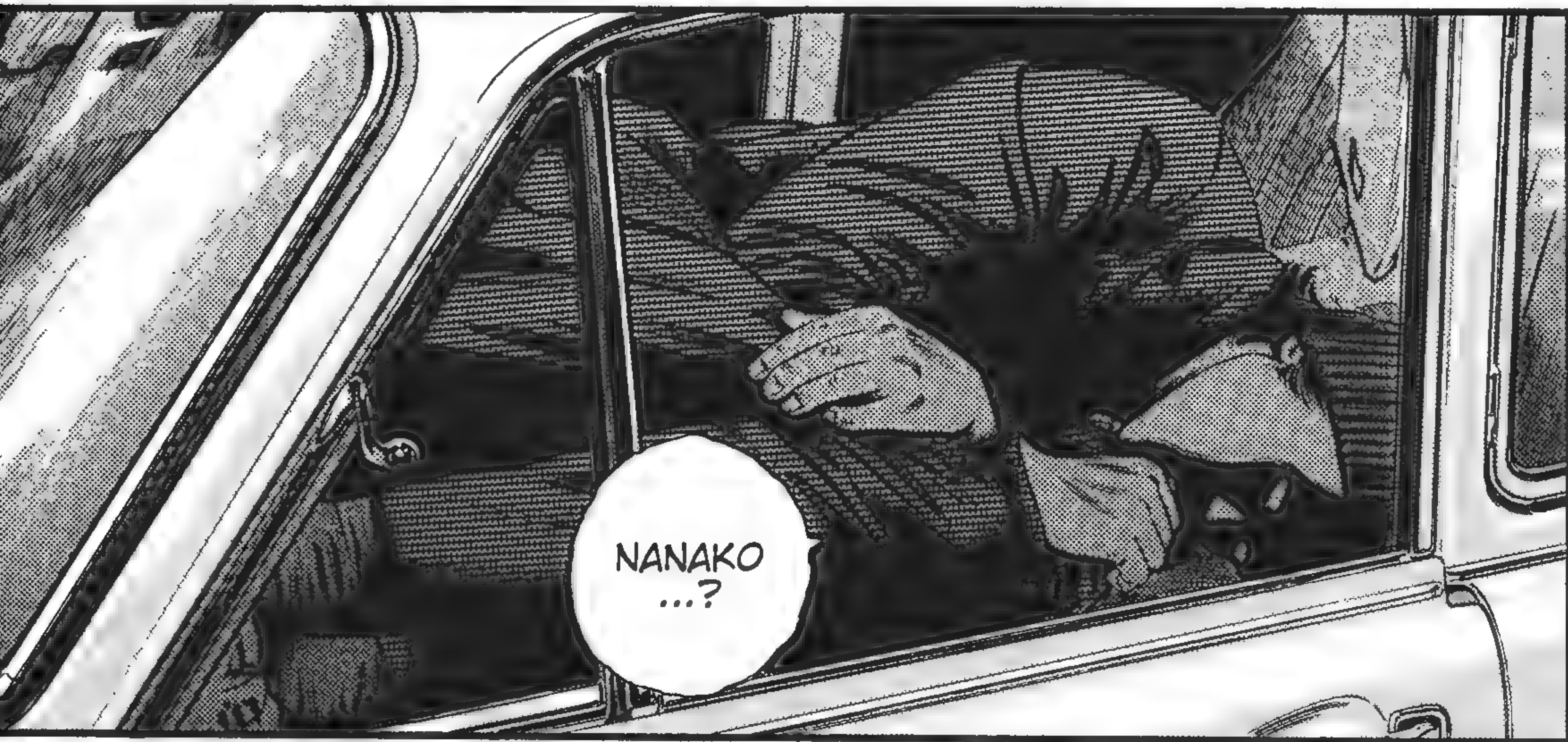






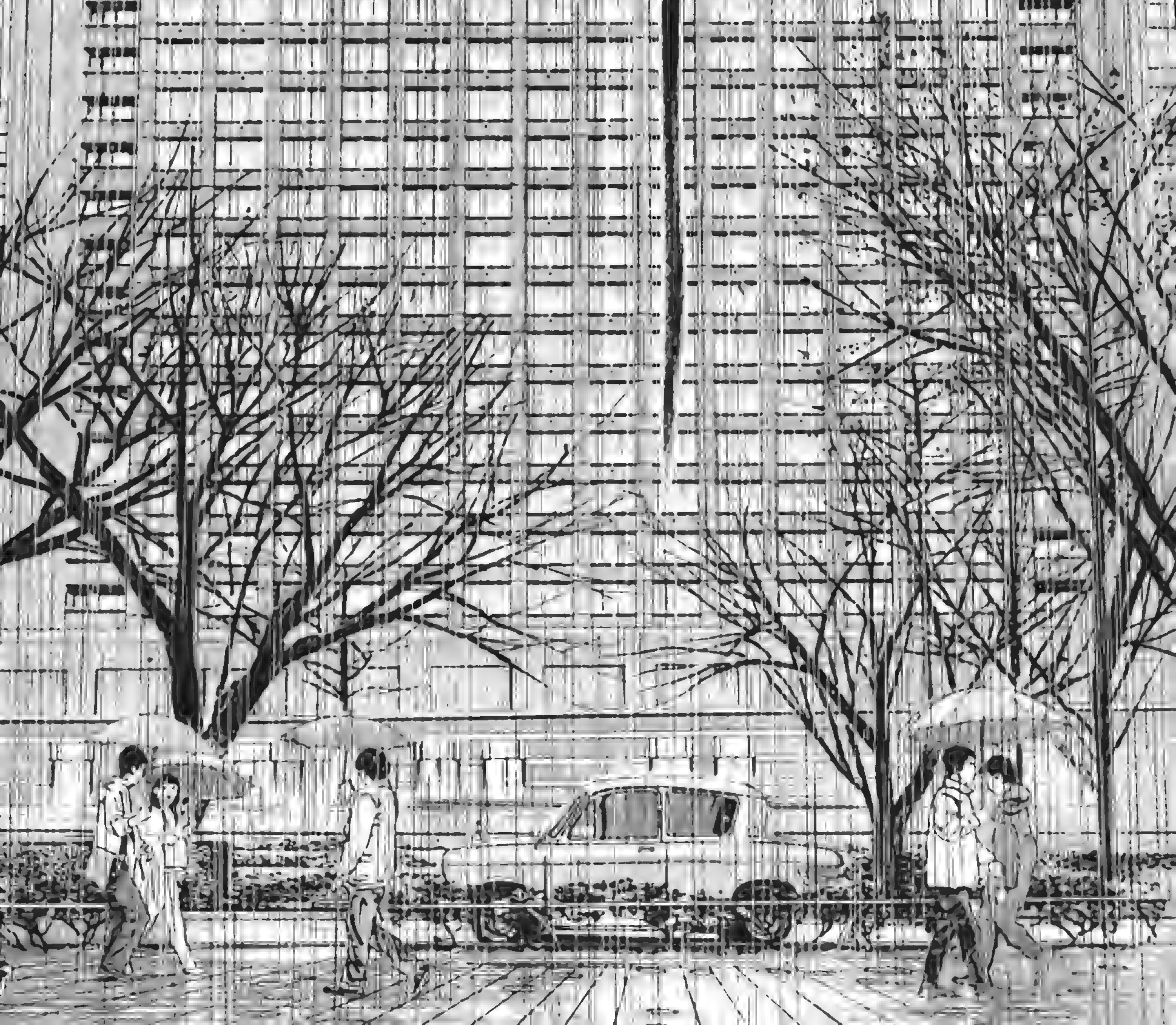
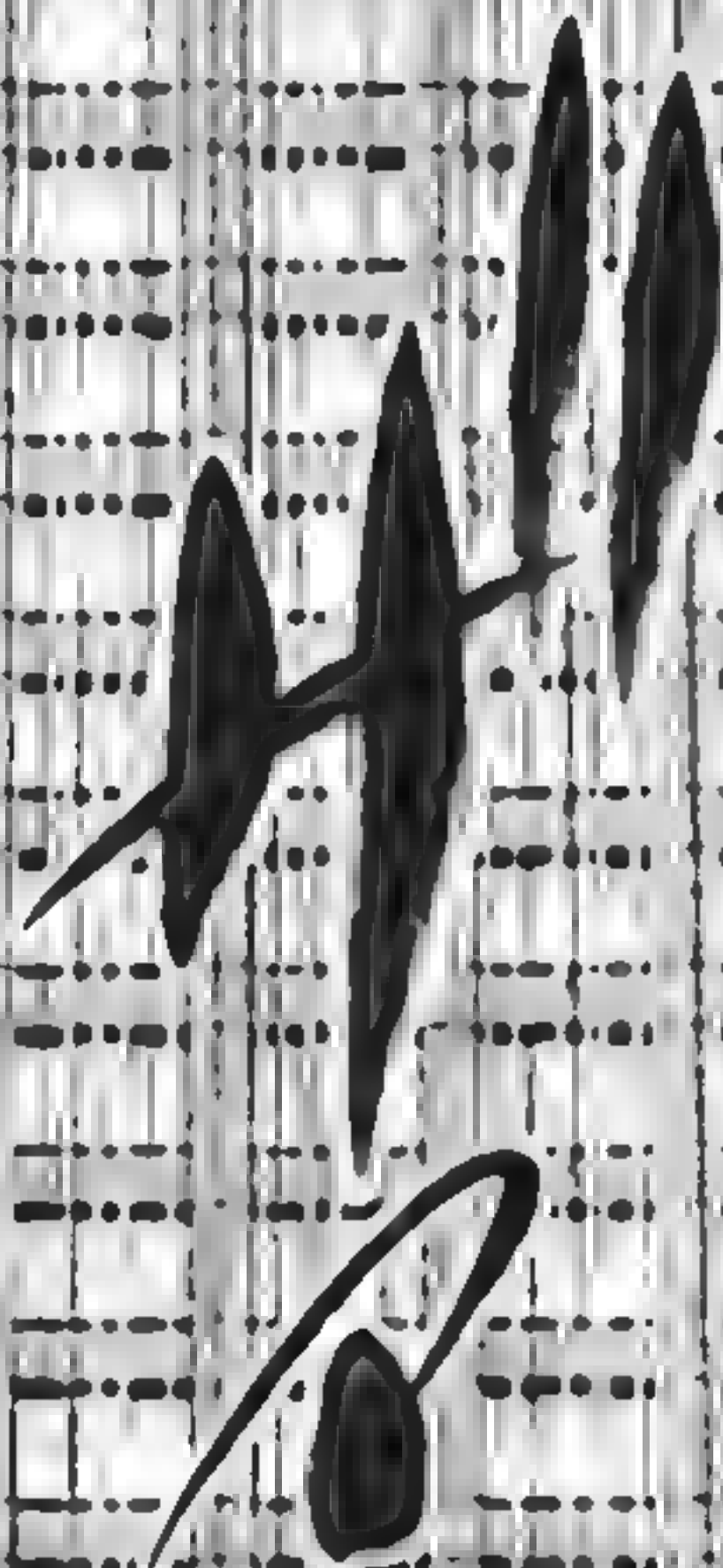




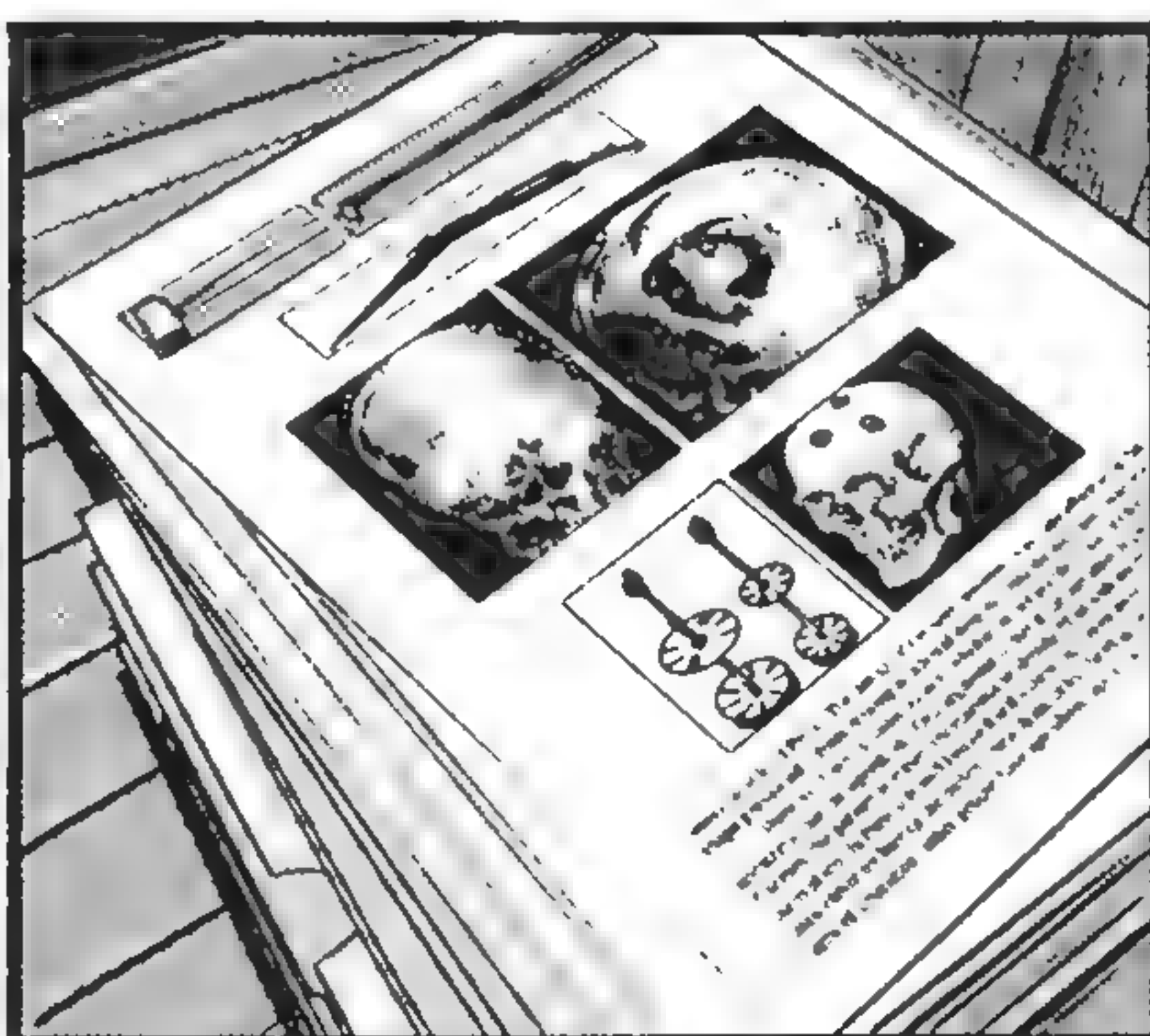




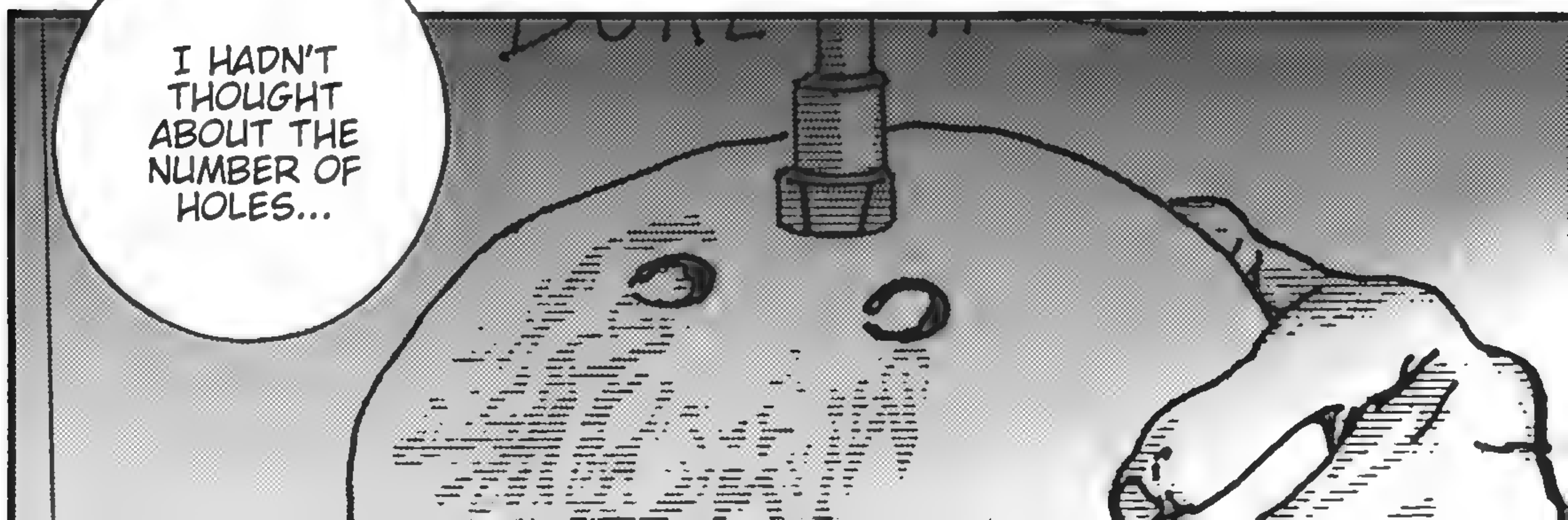
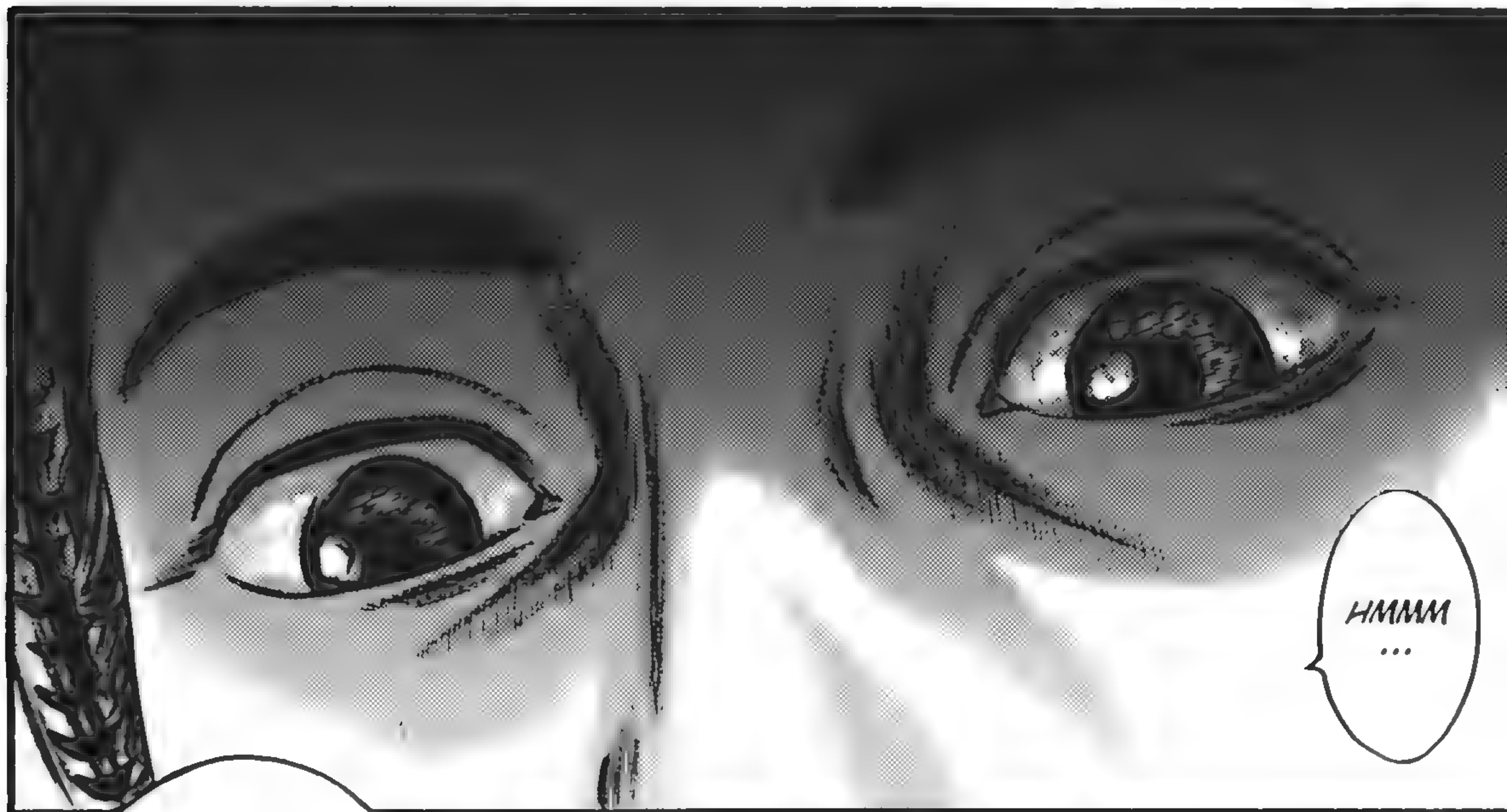
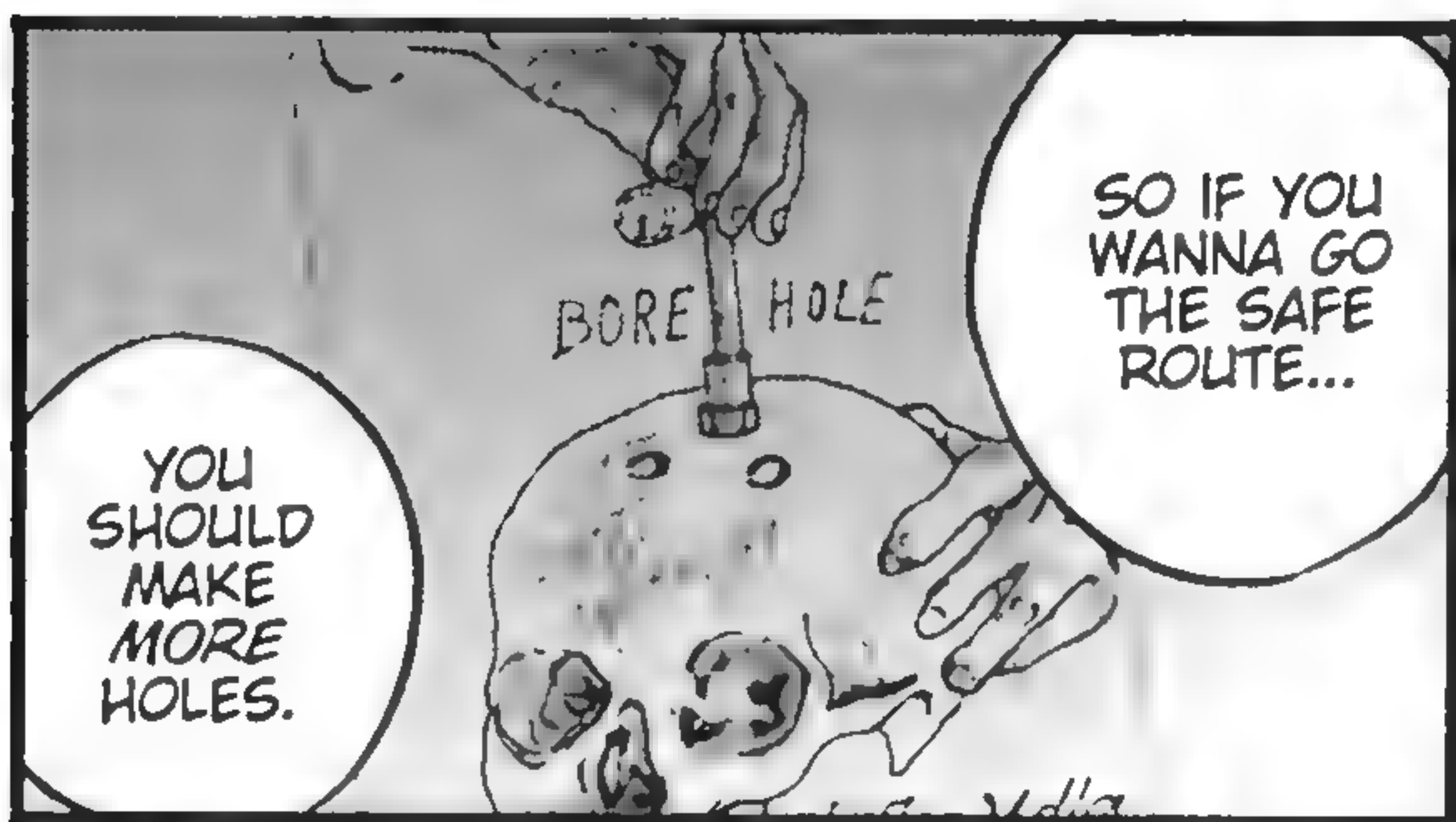
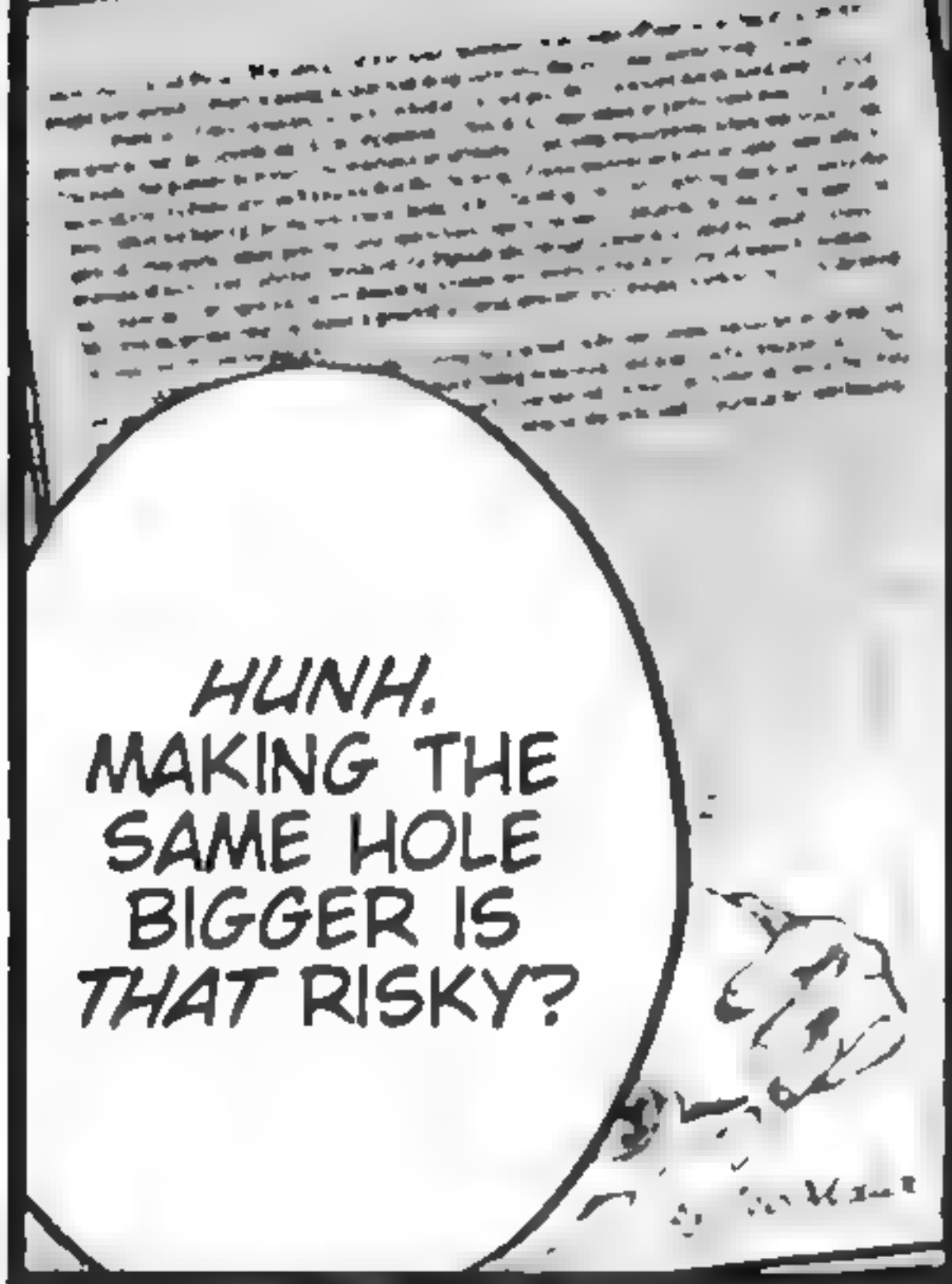
SHAA



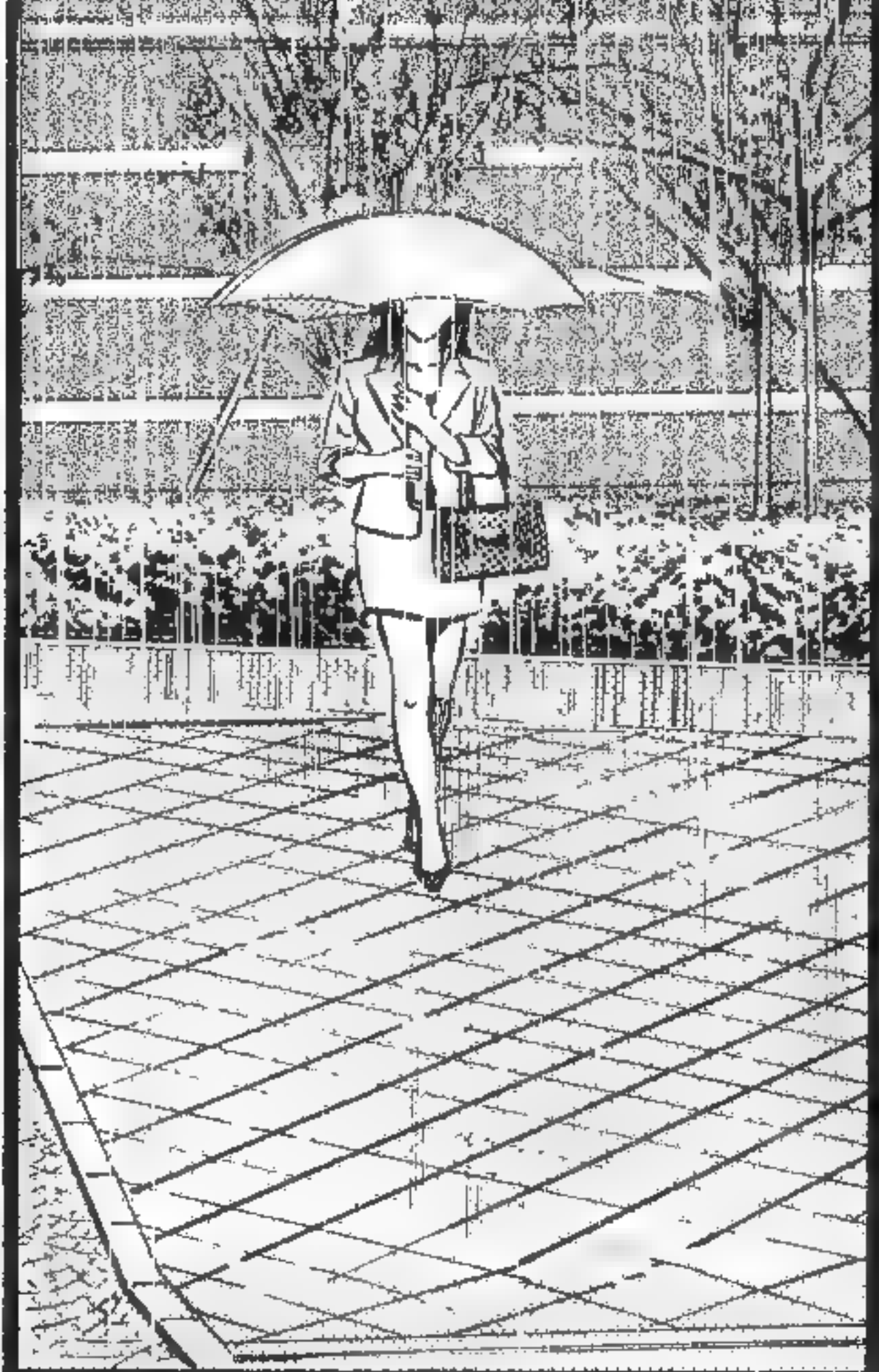




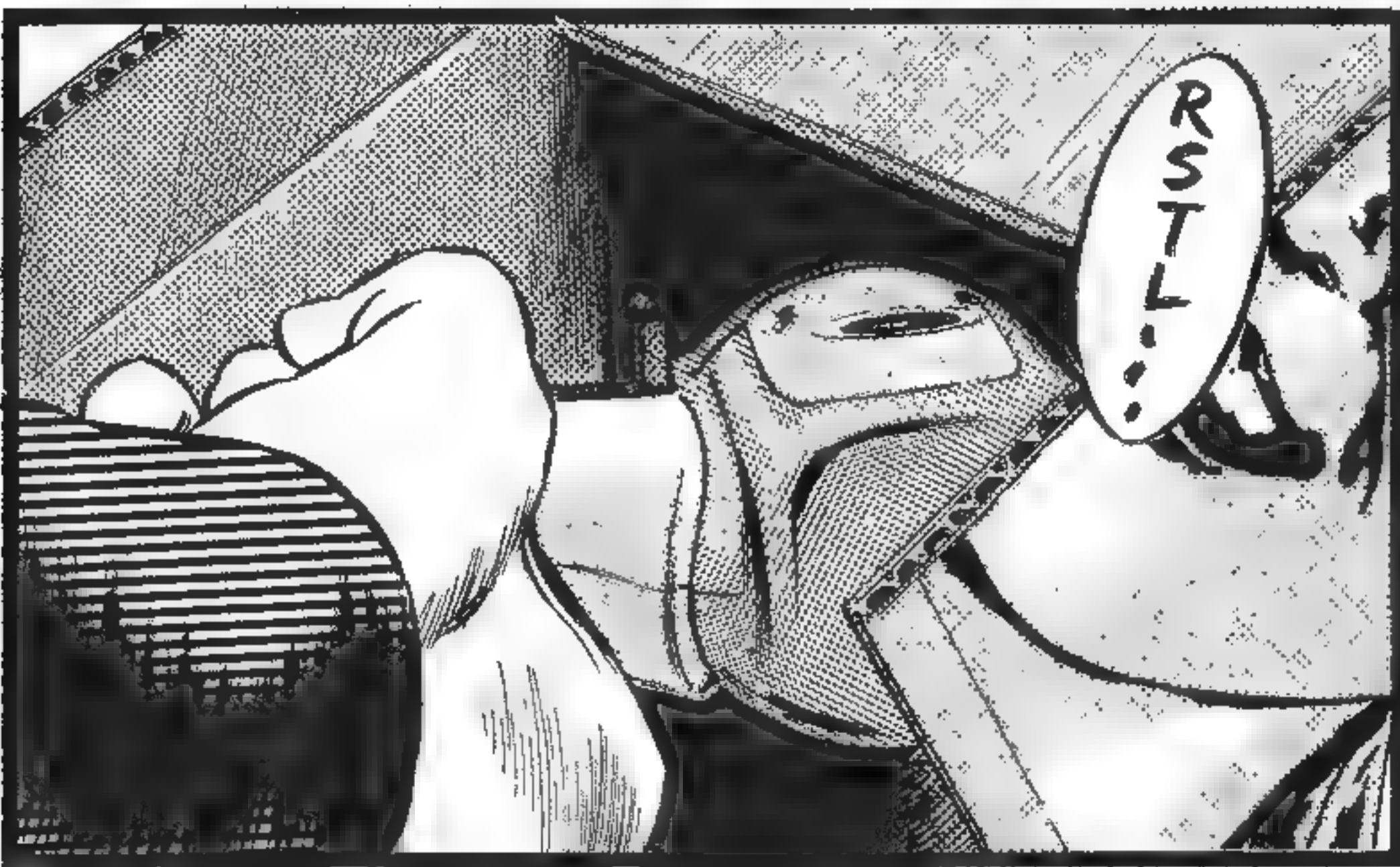
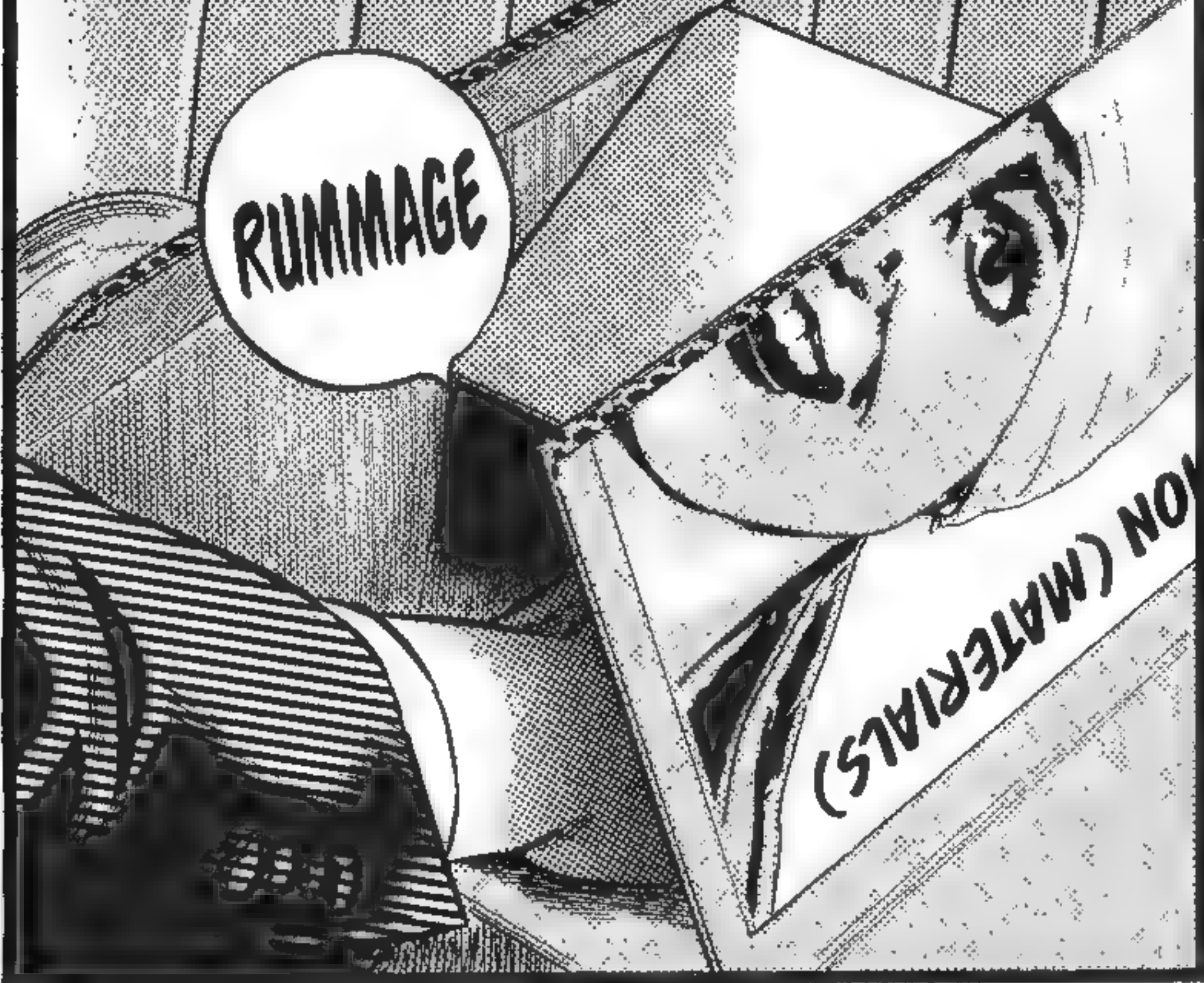
























Name plate: Tanaka-san











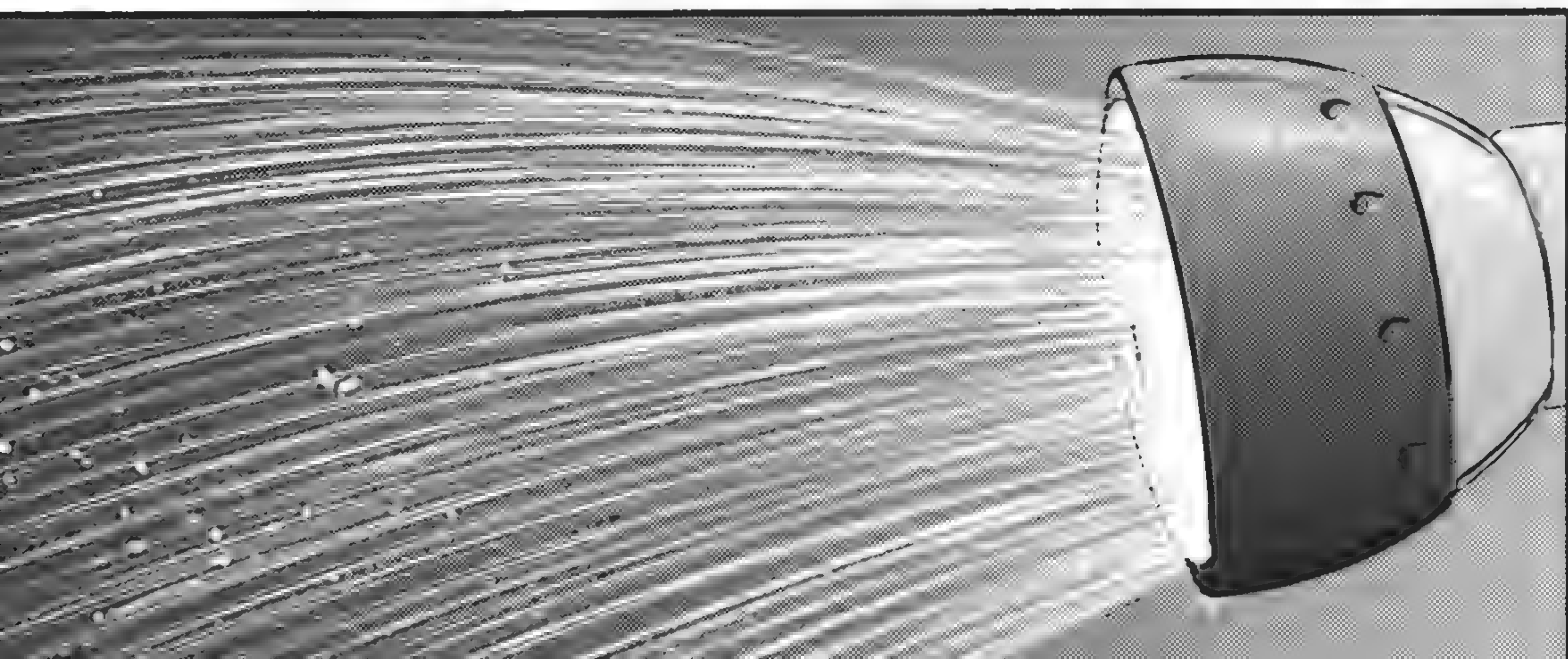
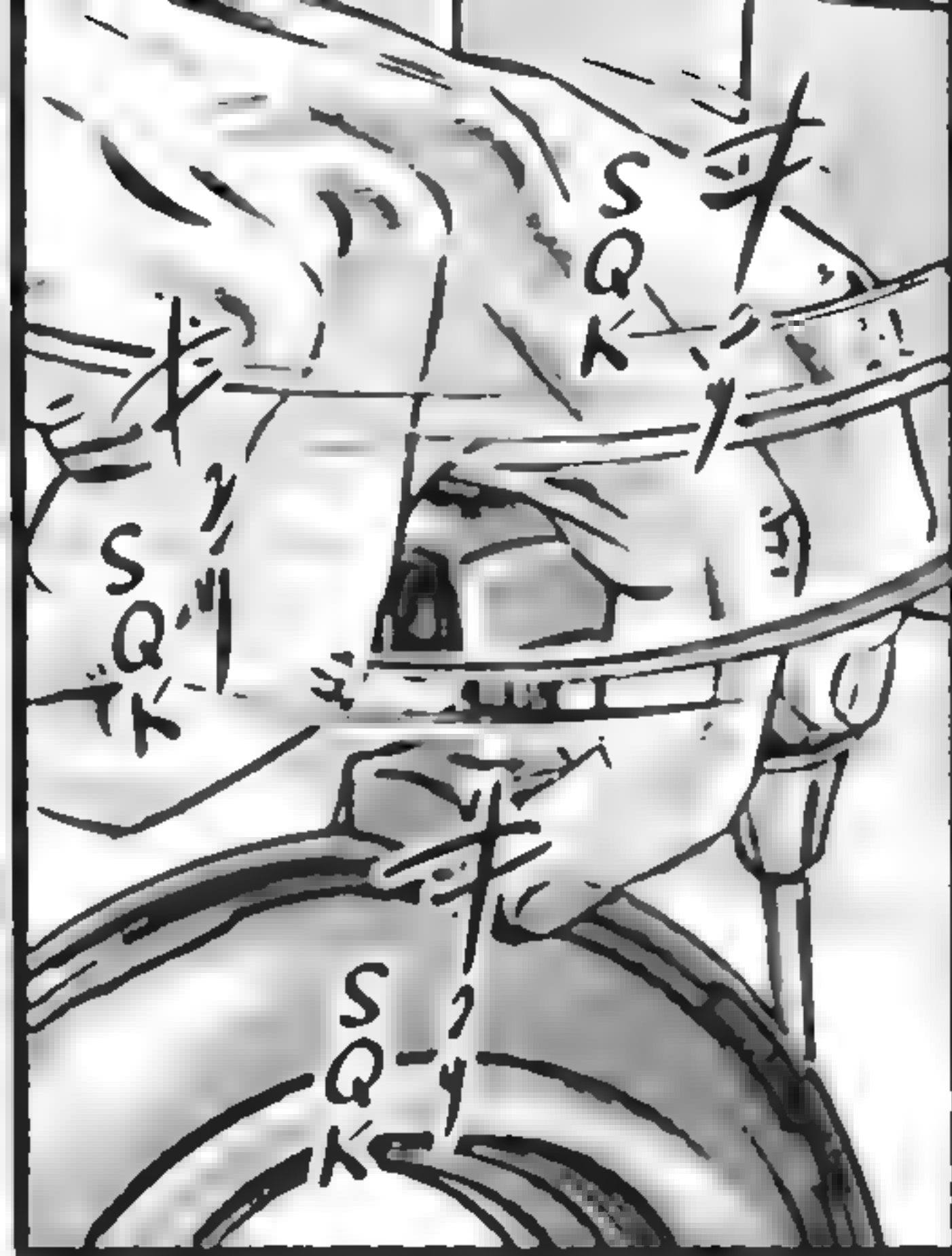
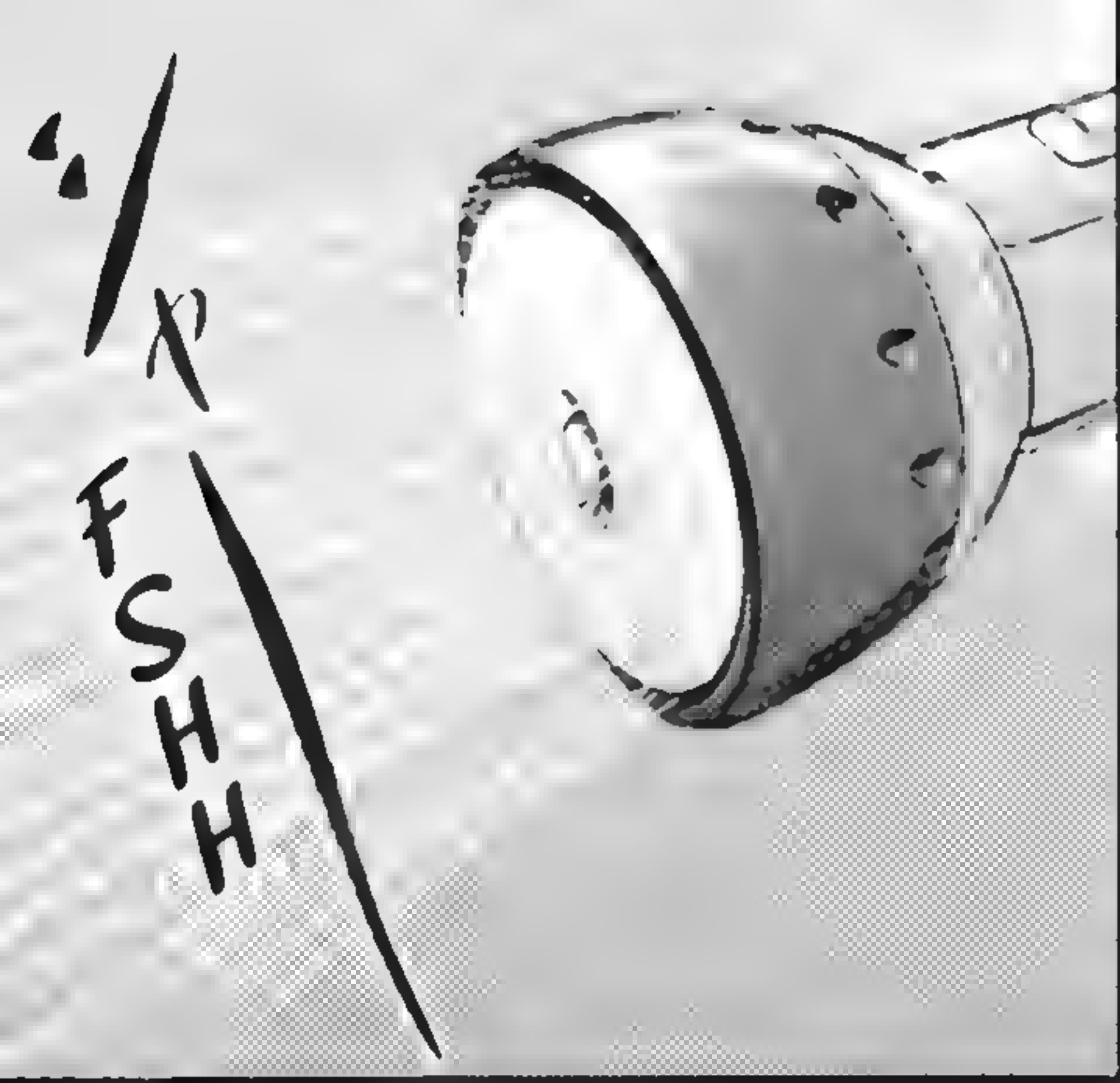








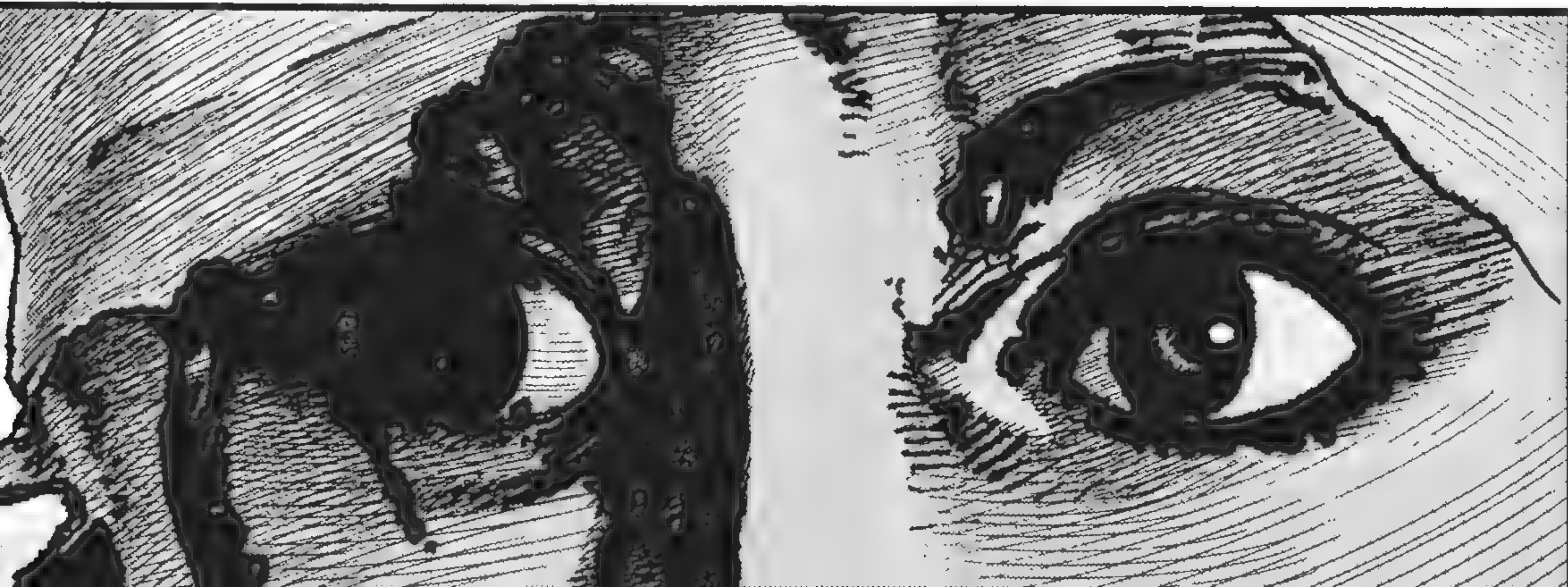




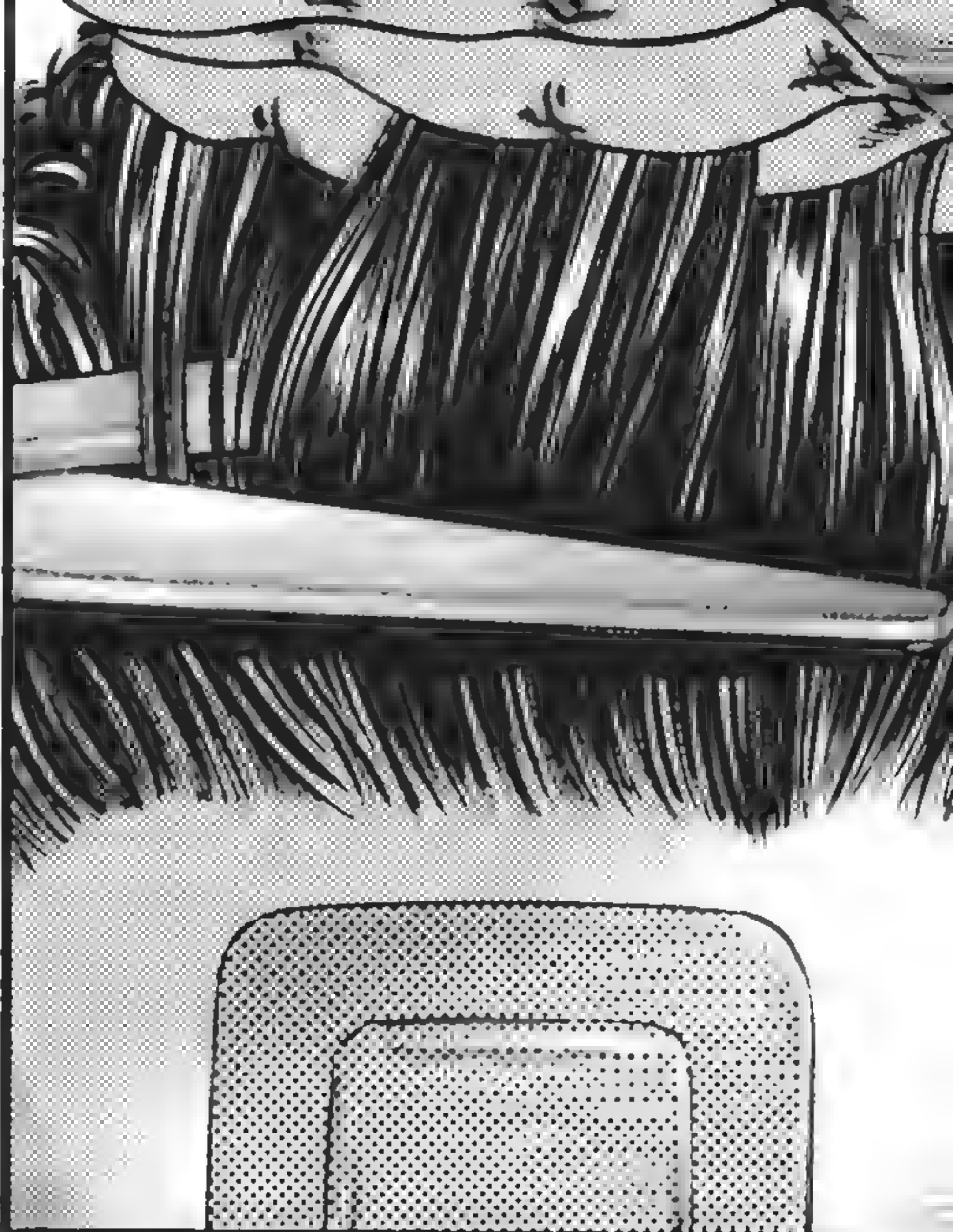




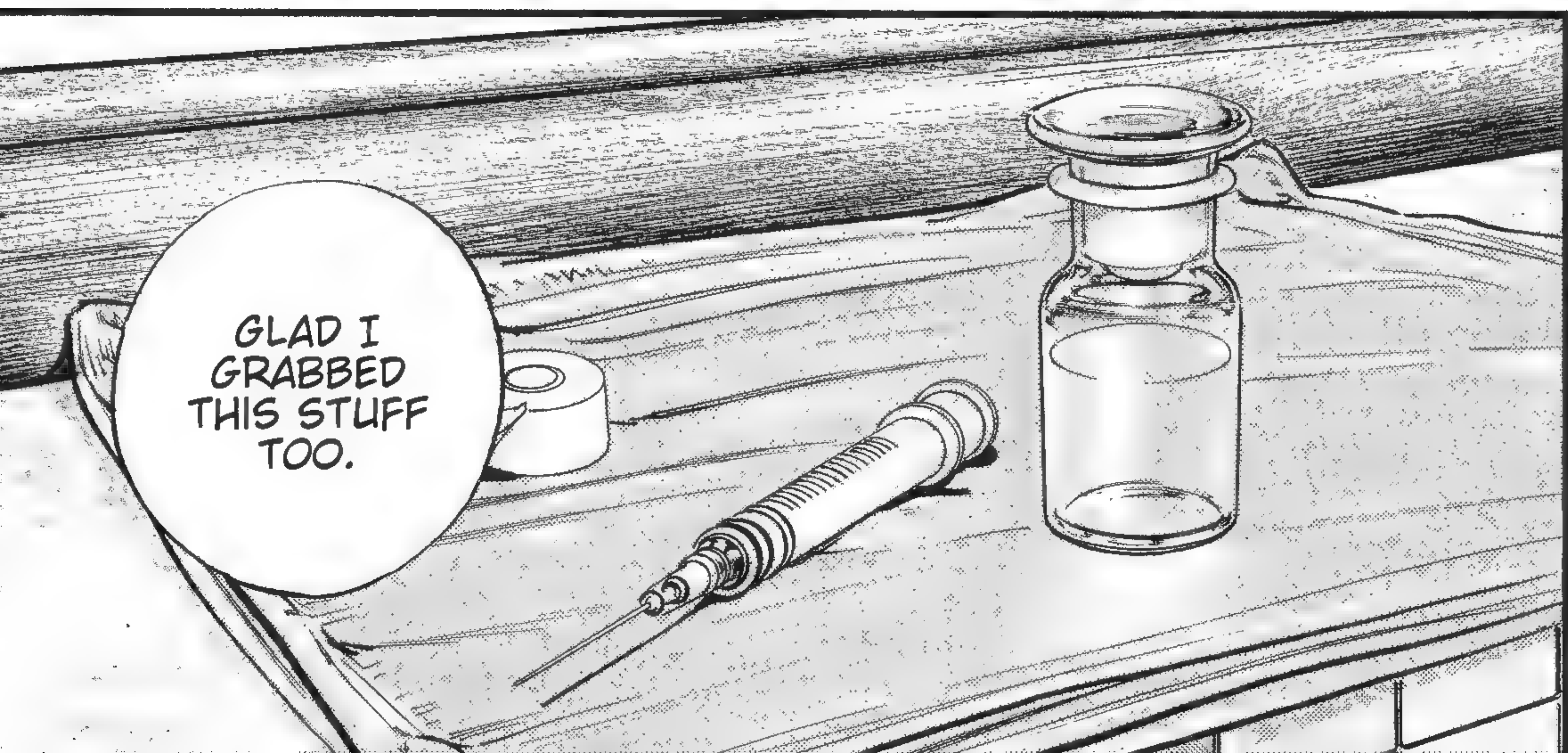




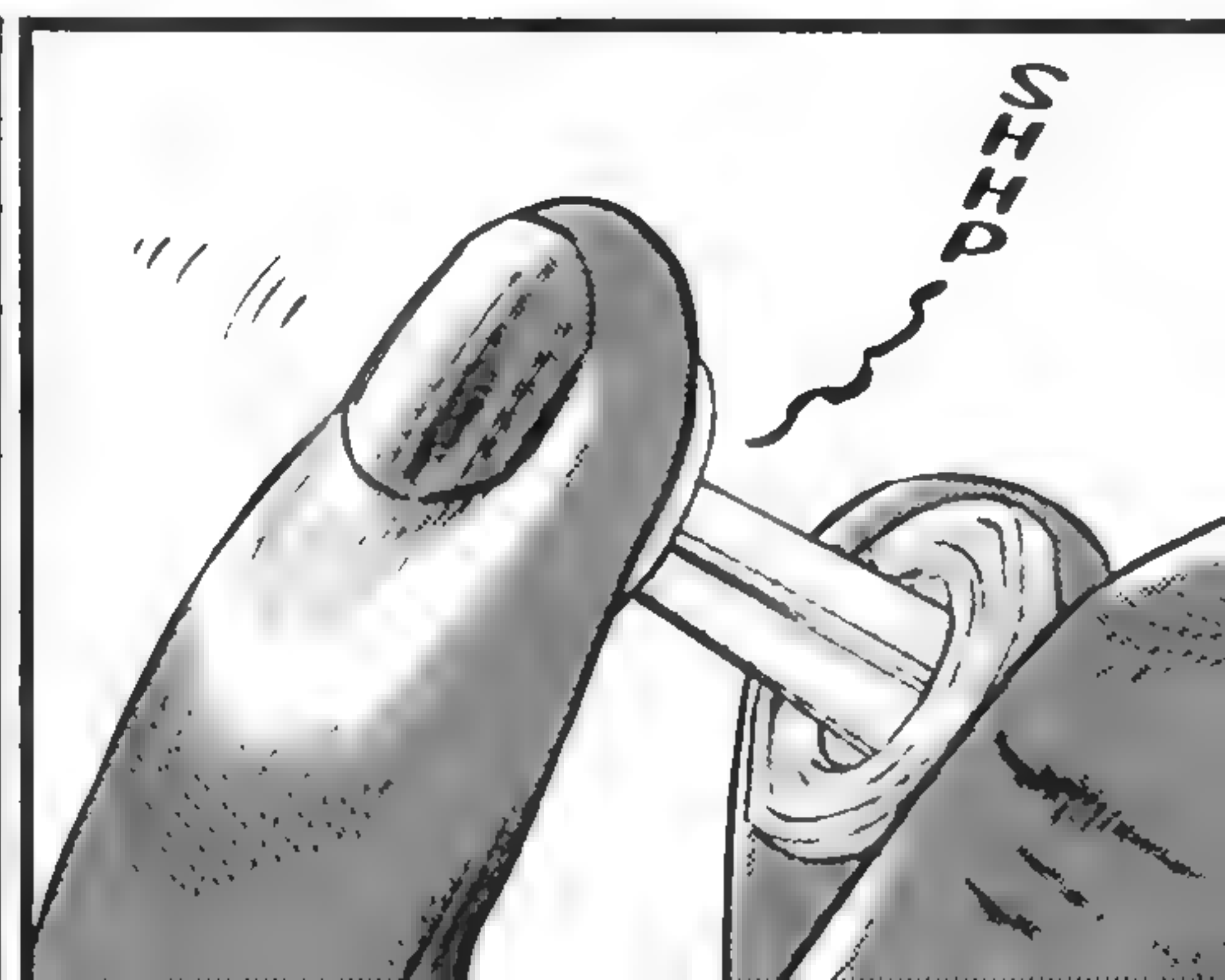
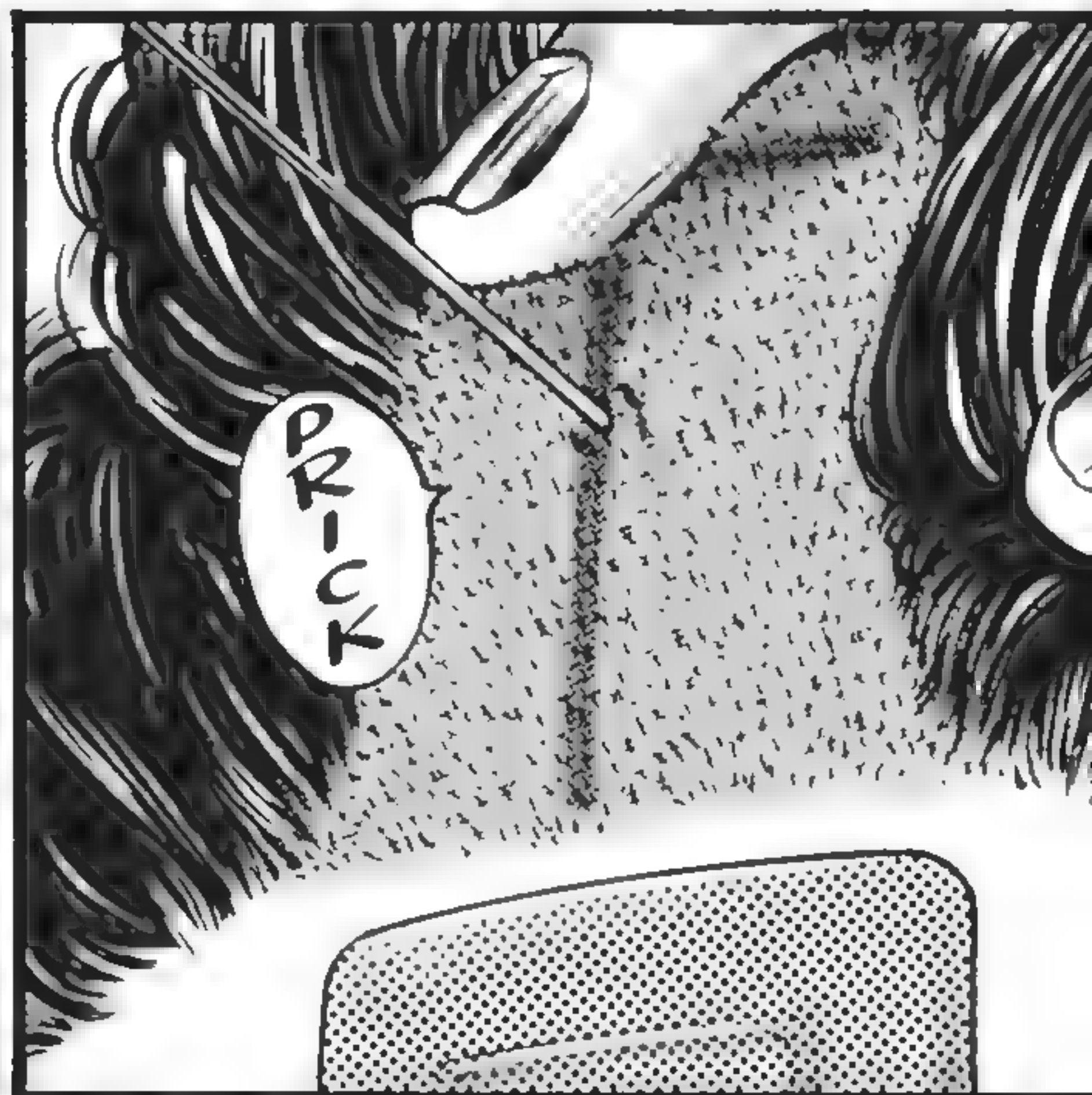




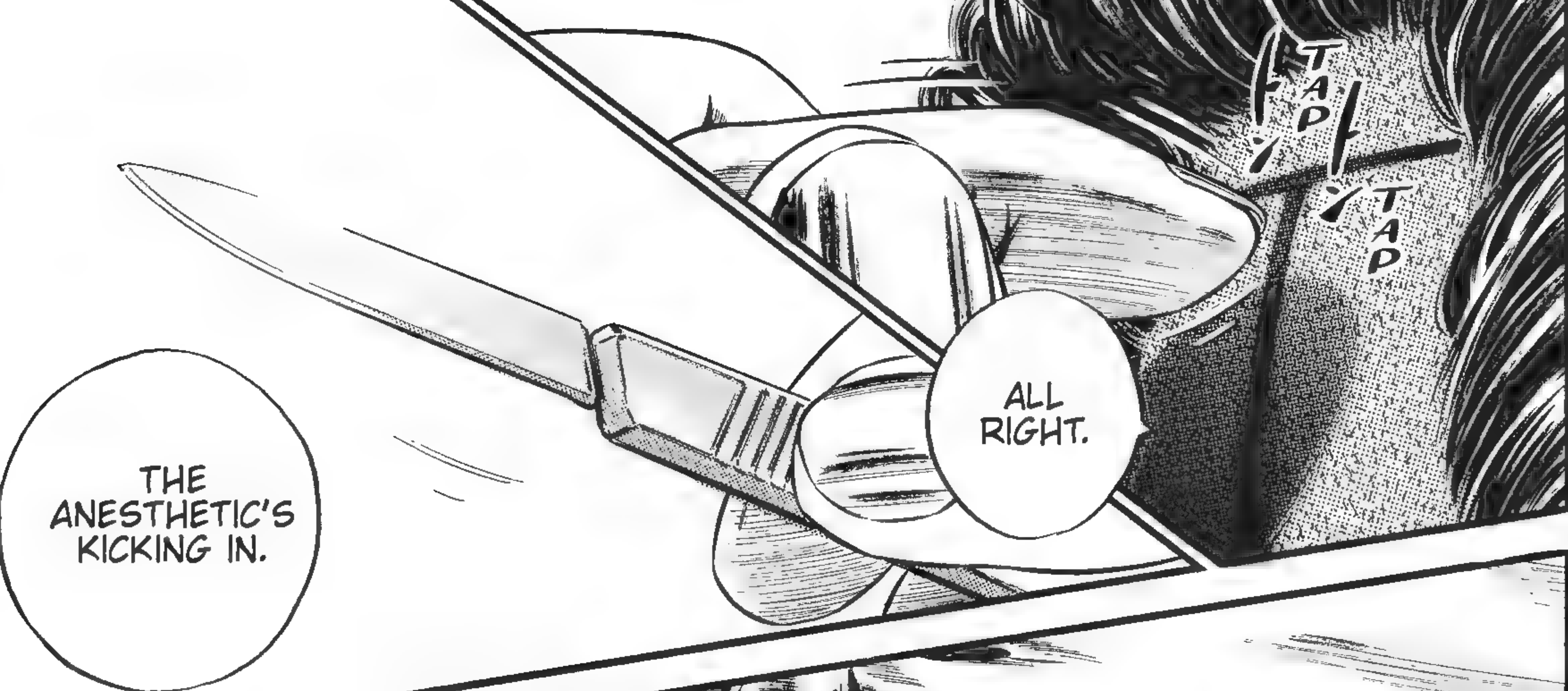




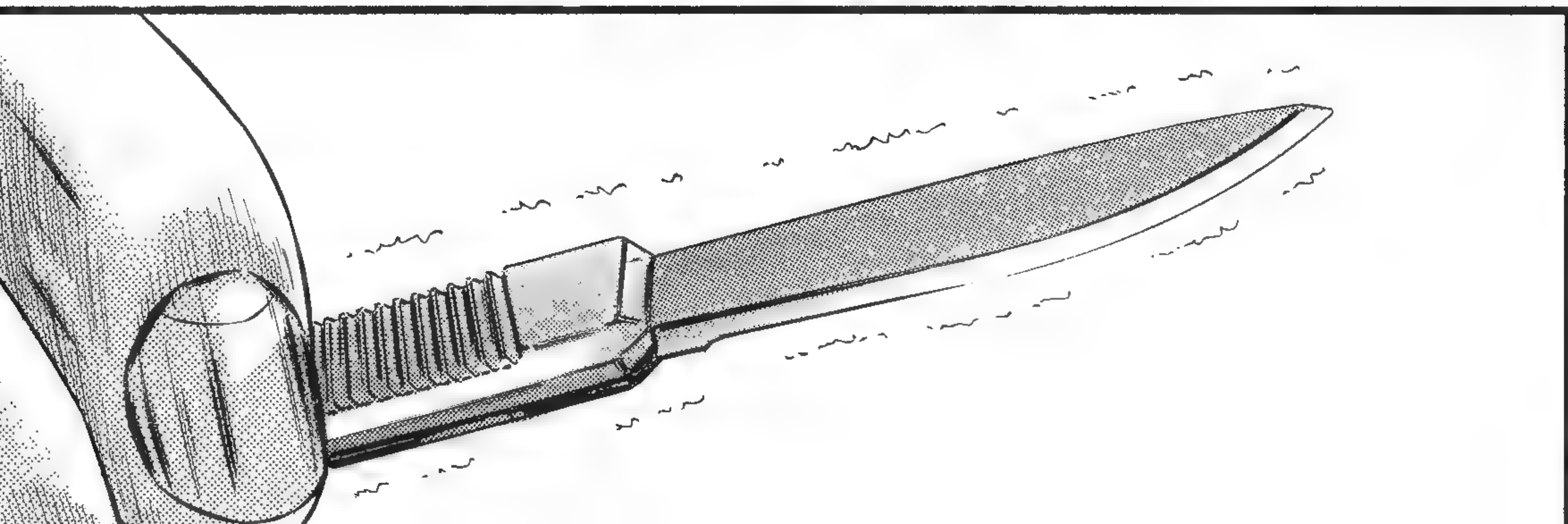




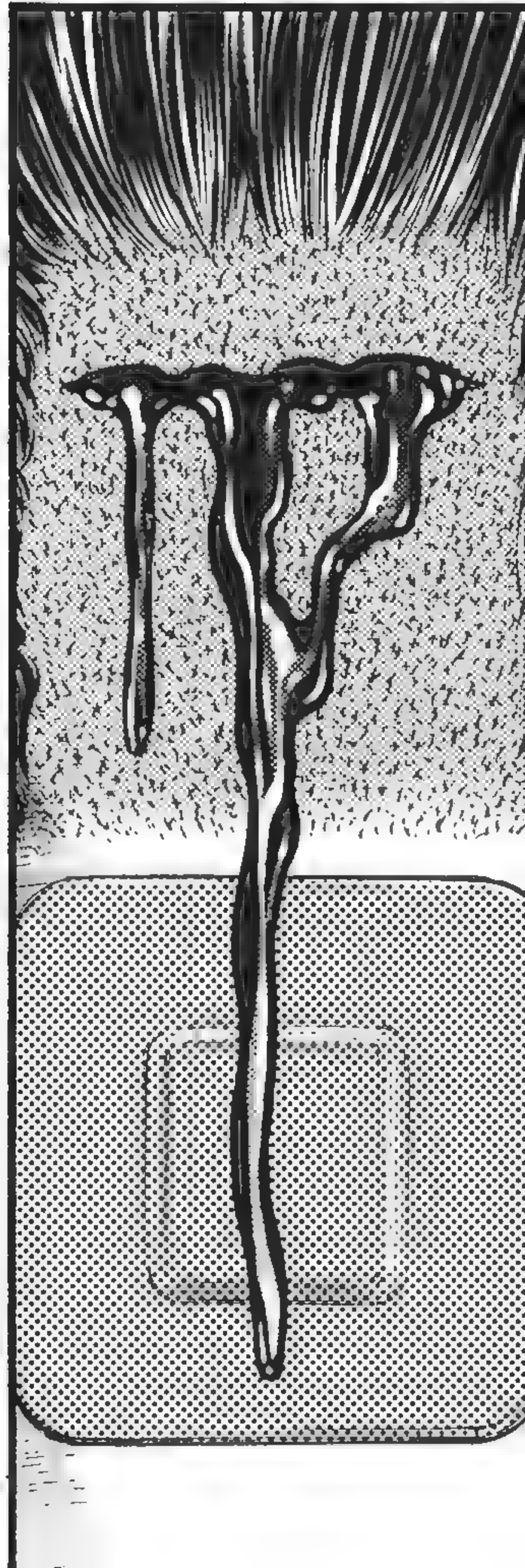
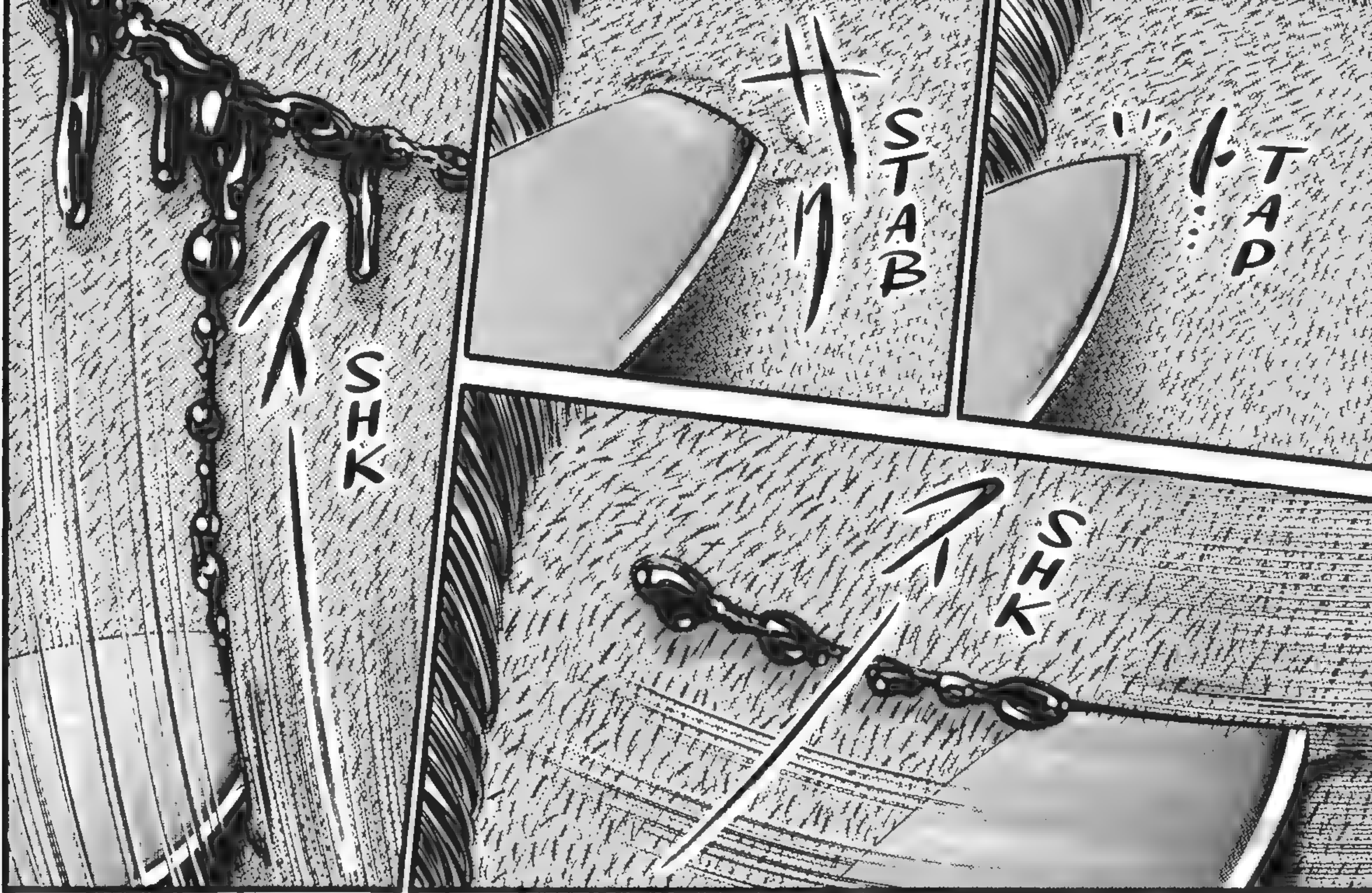




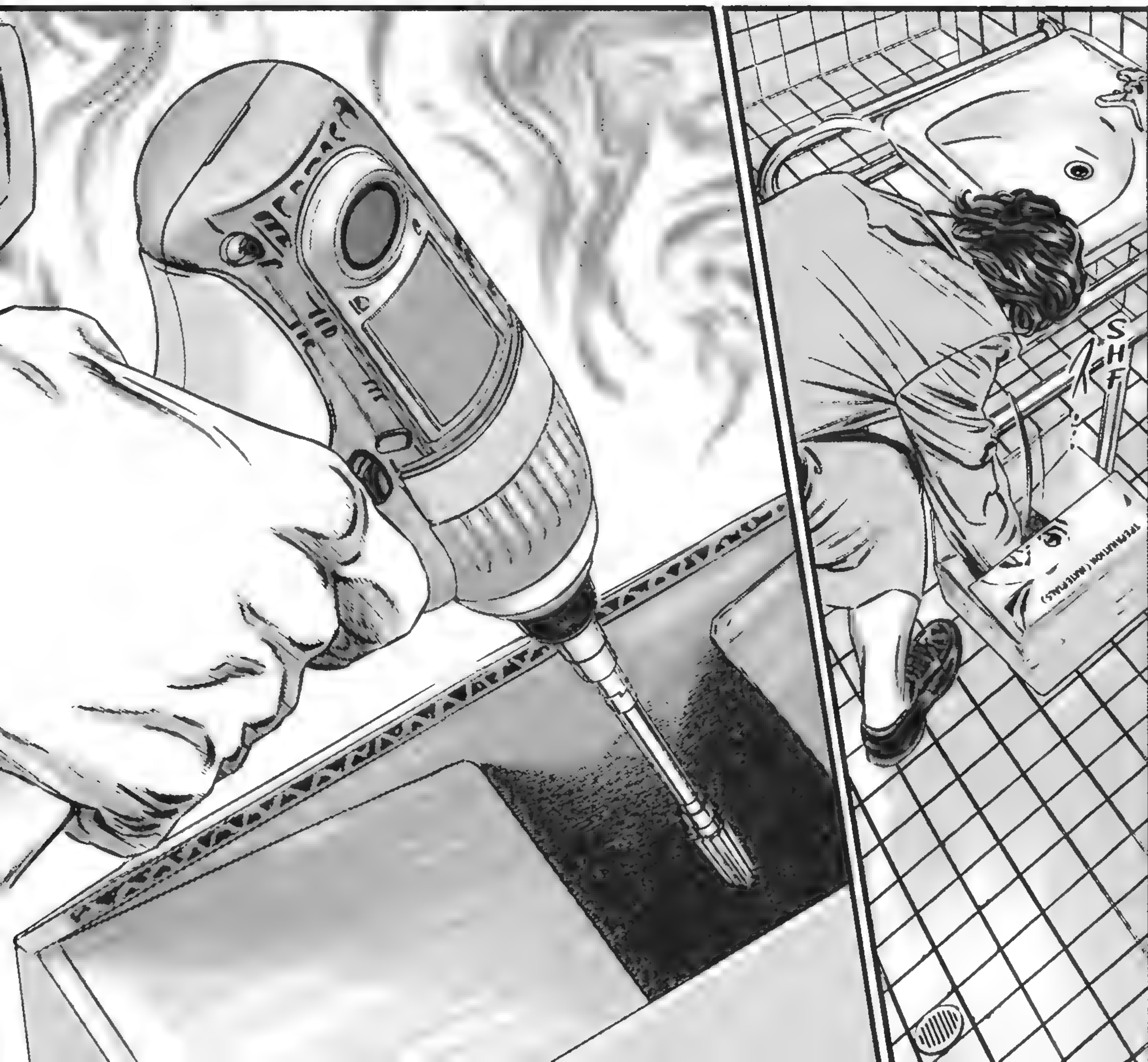
THE  
ANESTHETIC'S  
KICKING IN.















IT'S  
FRICKIN'  
HUGE.

THIS IS  
THE SEVEN  
MILLIMETER,  
HUH?



V  
W  
E  
E  
E  
E  
E  
E





SUPPOSEDLY,  
THIS THING'S  
MADE SO IT'LL  
AUTOMATICALLY  
STOP BEFORE  
IT HITS THE  
CEREBRAL  
MEMBRANE.

...



THAT'S  
THE END  
FOR ME.  
UNDER-  
STAND?

'CAUSE IF  
YOU GO ANY  
FARTHER...  
IF YOU BREAK  
THROUGH  
THAT  
MEMBRANE  
...

HEAR THAT?  
YOU'RE ONLY  
DRILLING  
THROUGH  
THE BONE,  
BUDDY.



DON'T  
LET ME  
DOWN,  
PAL.









REPANATION

OCT 2 198











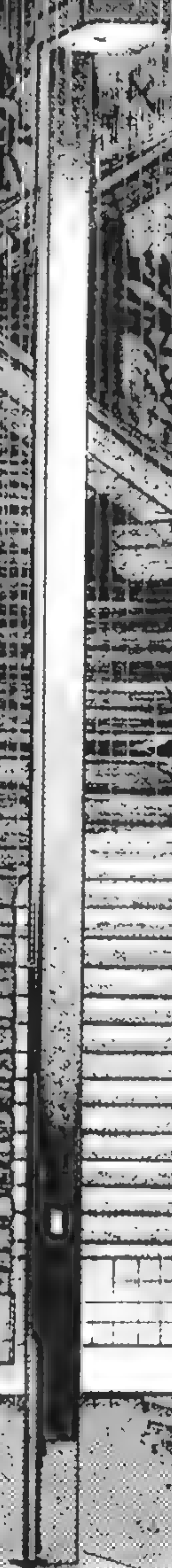




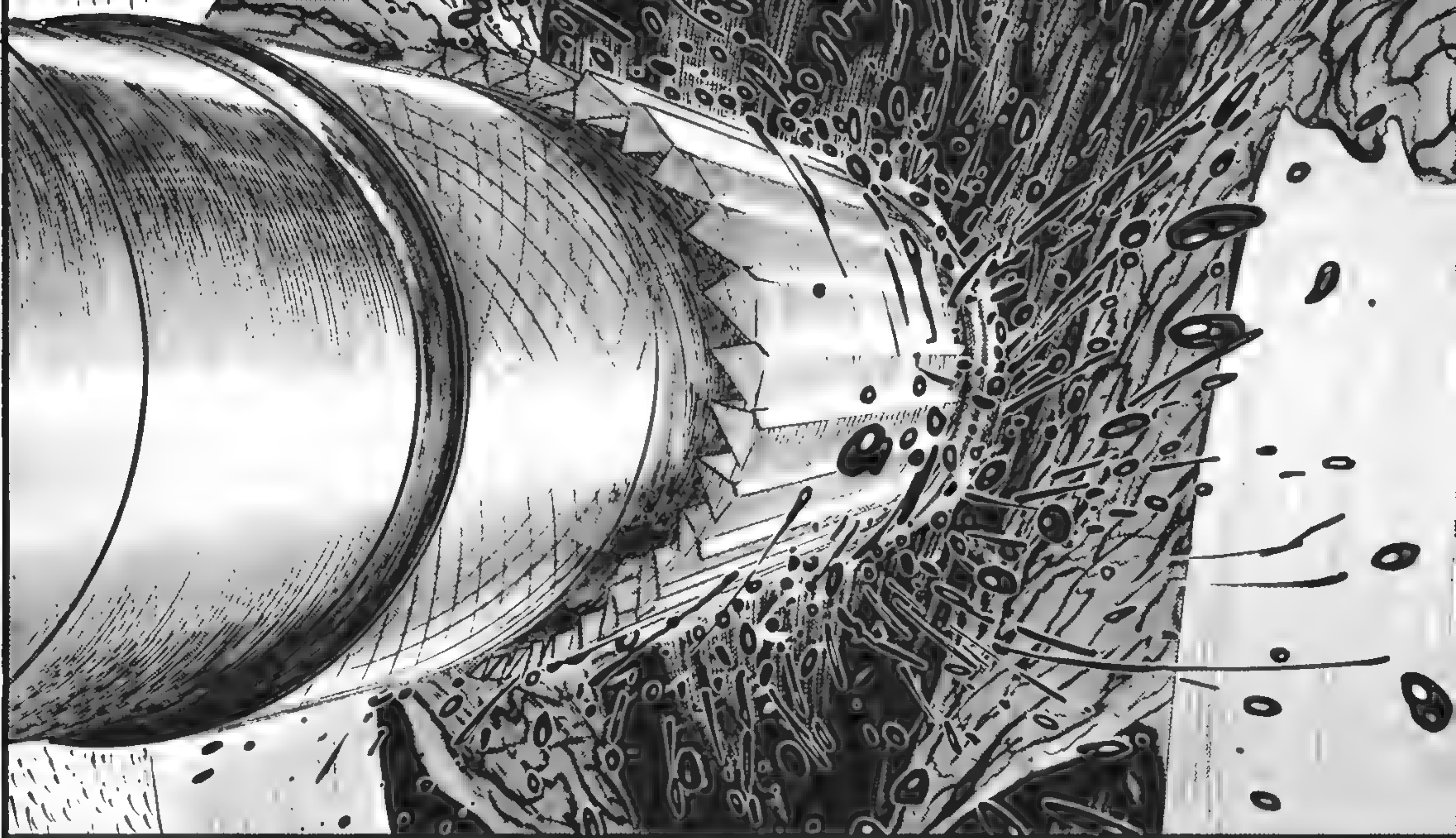


SHAA

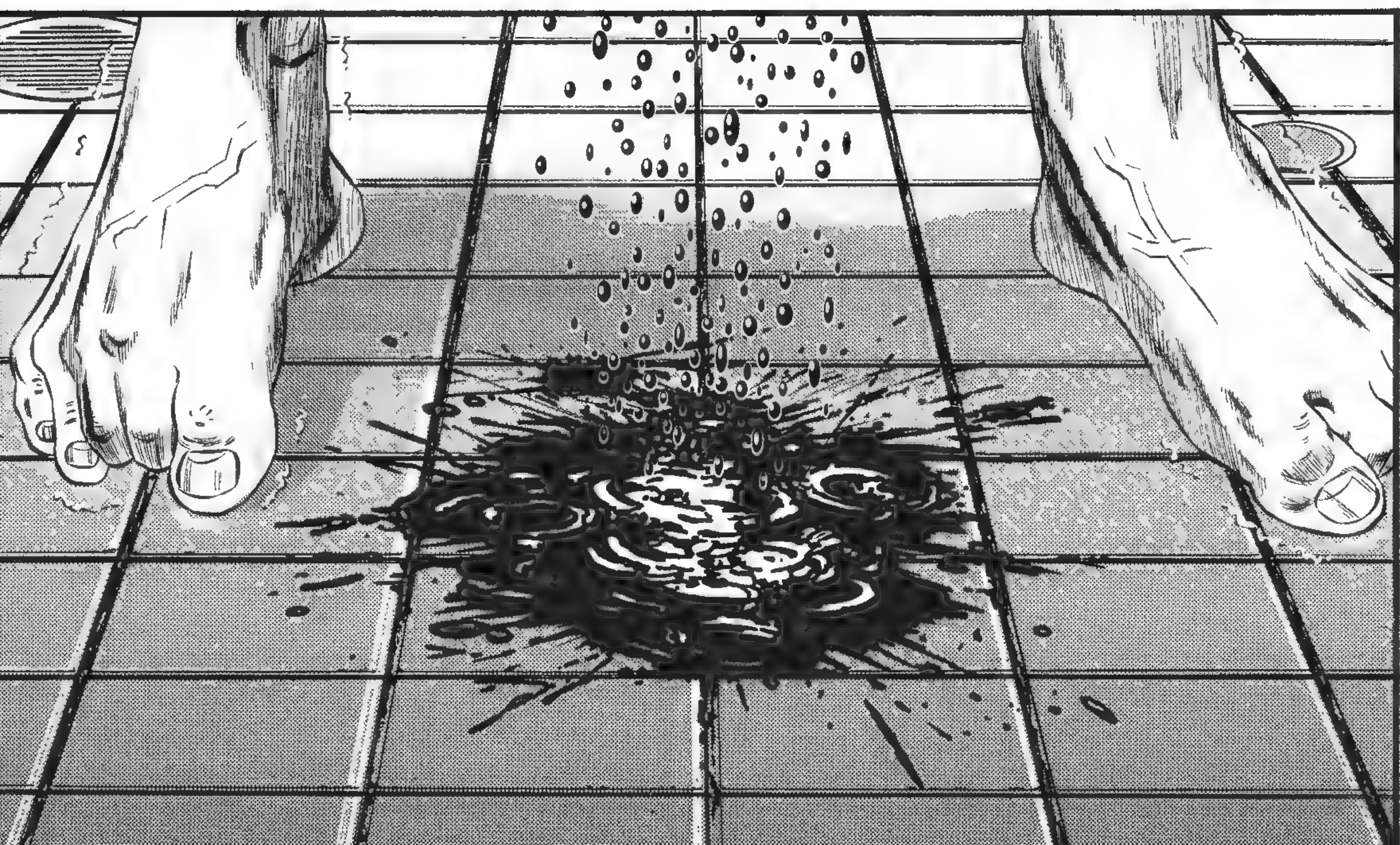
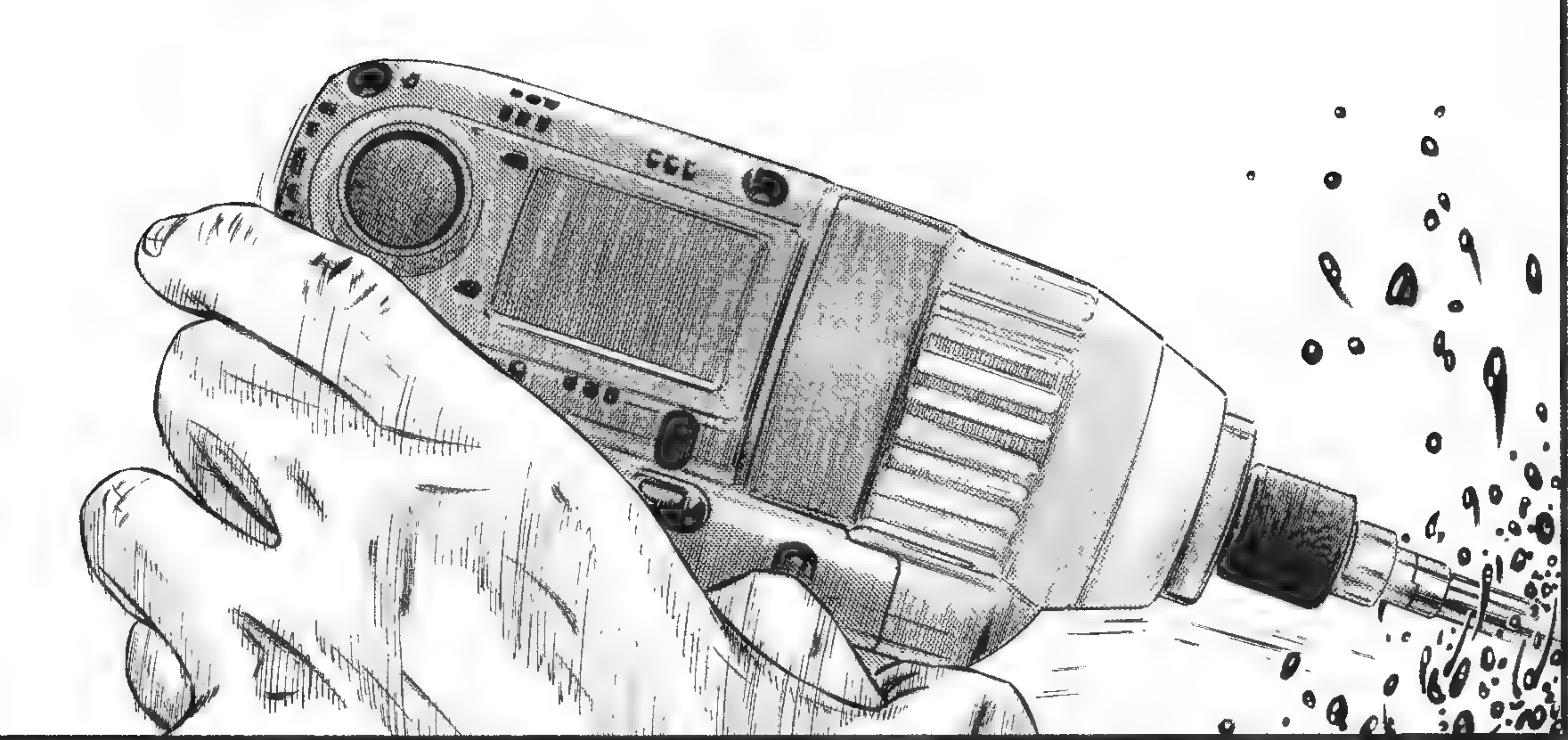
VWEEEEE!



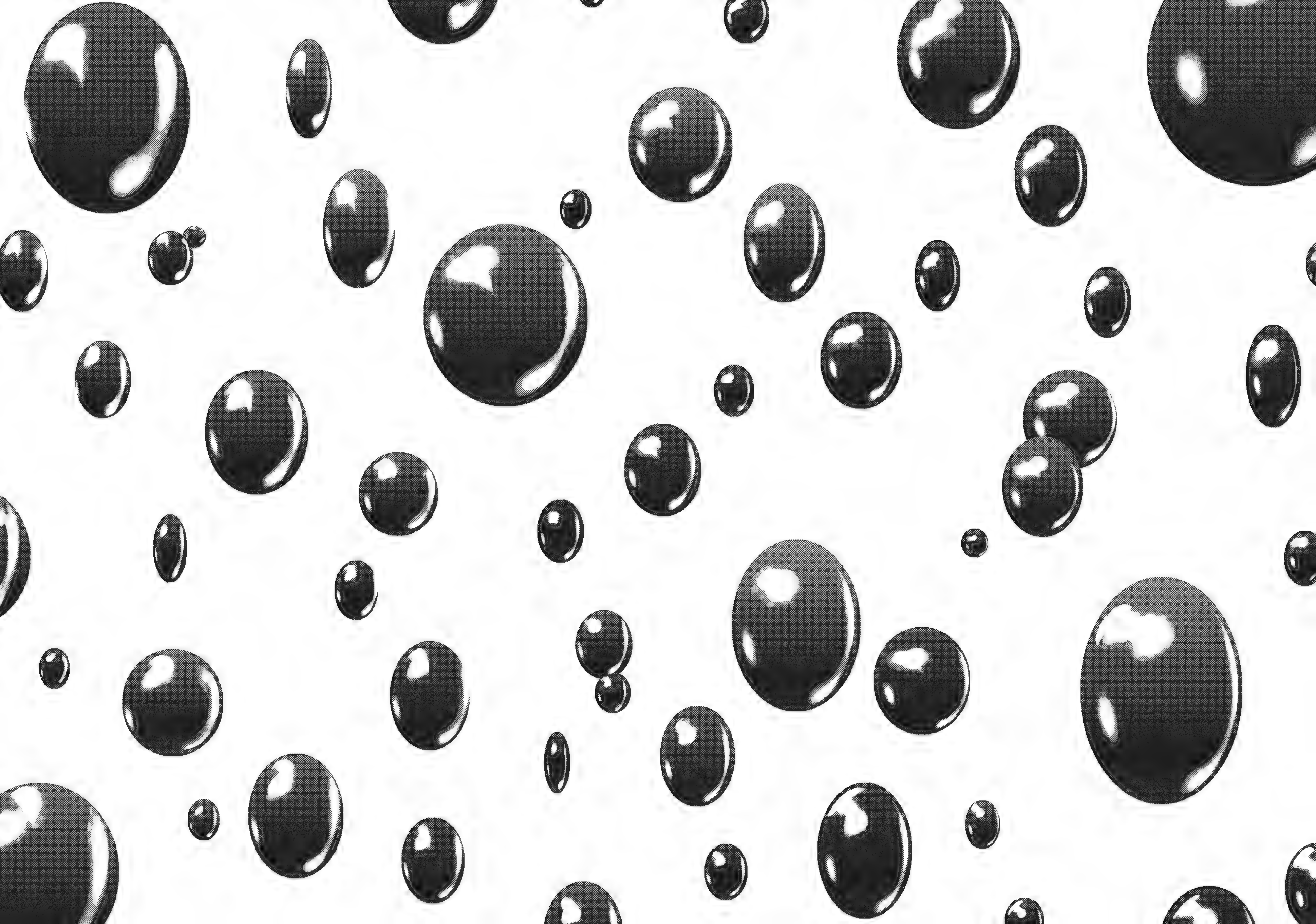




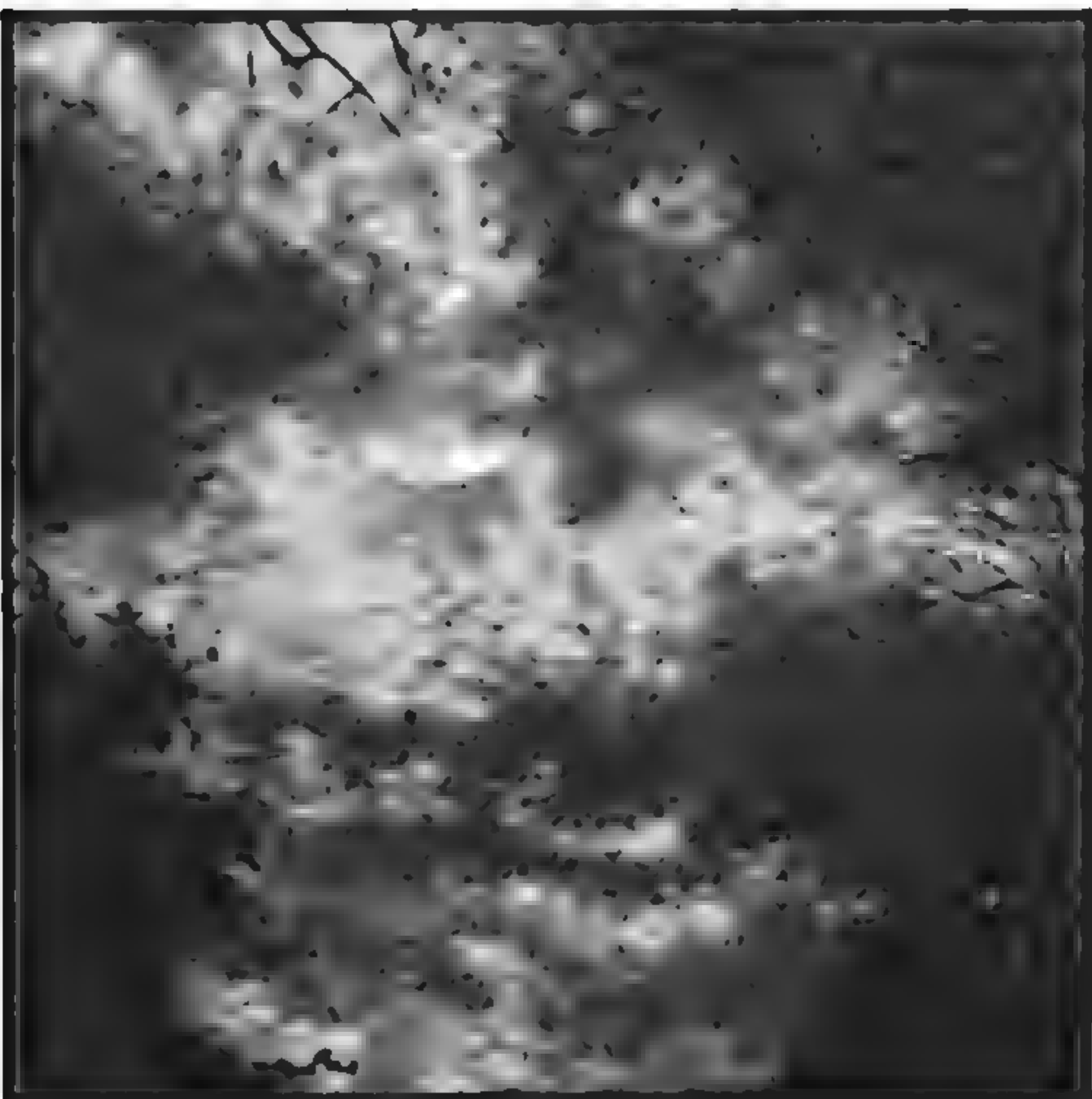




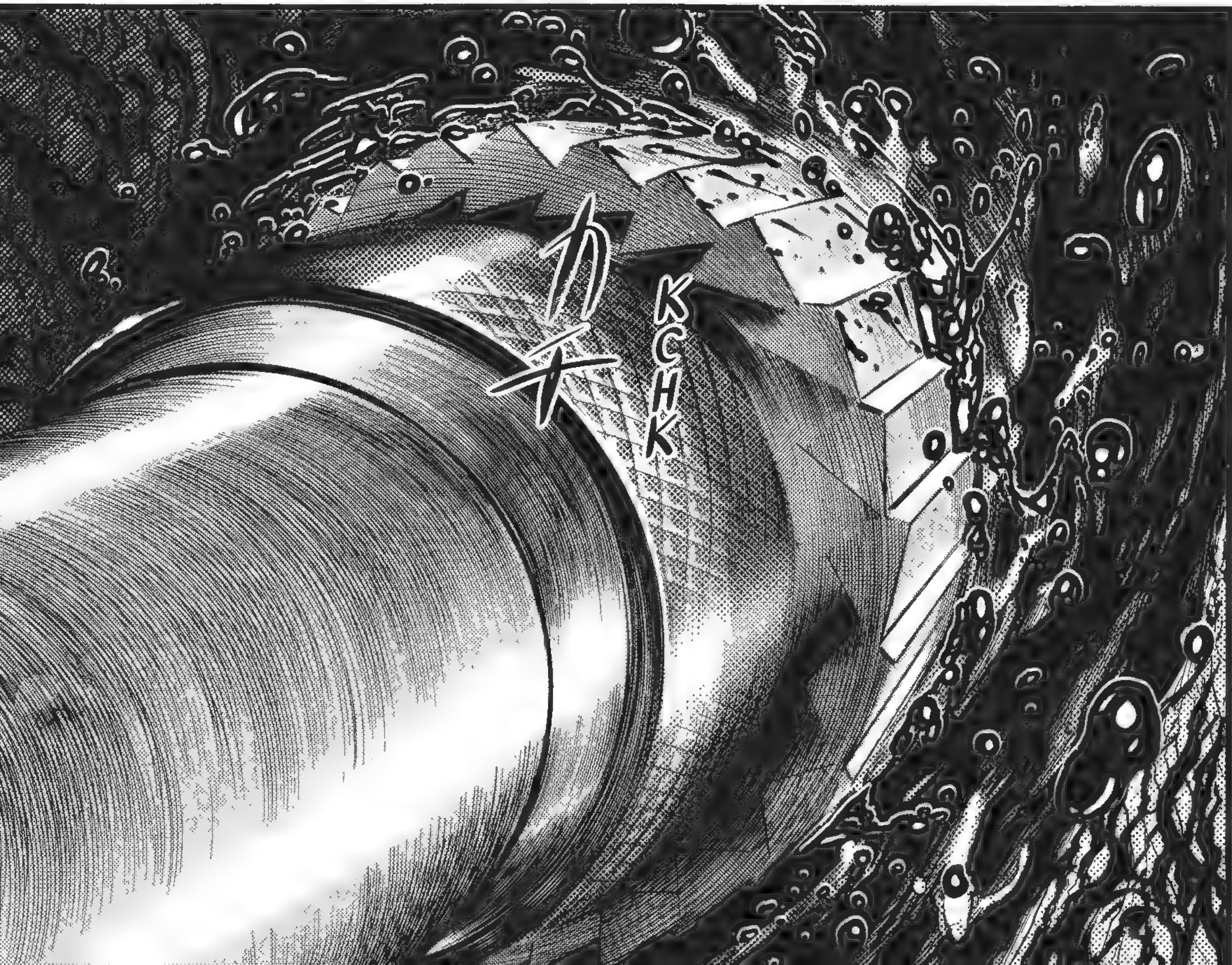
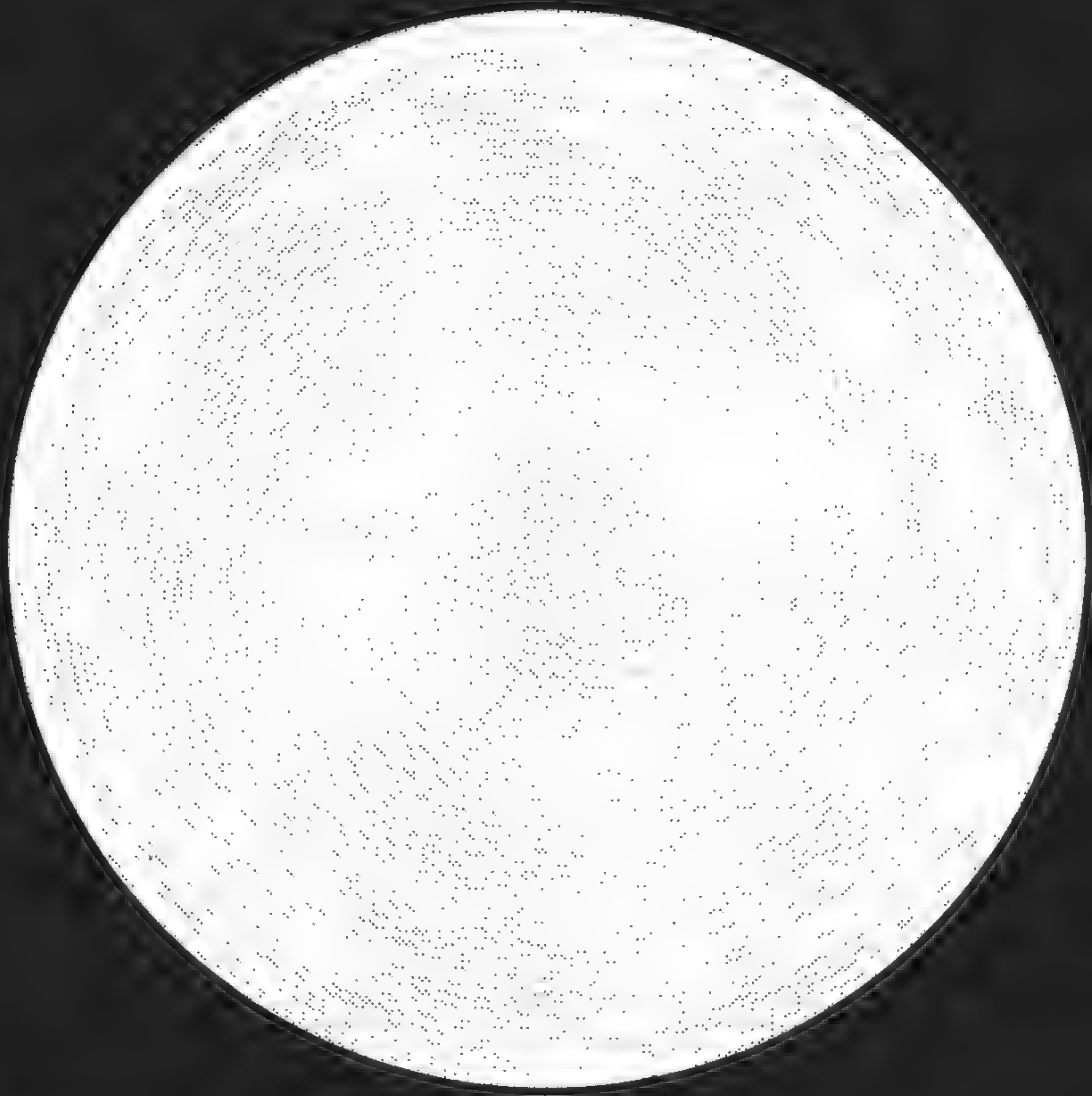




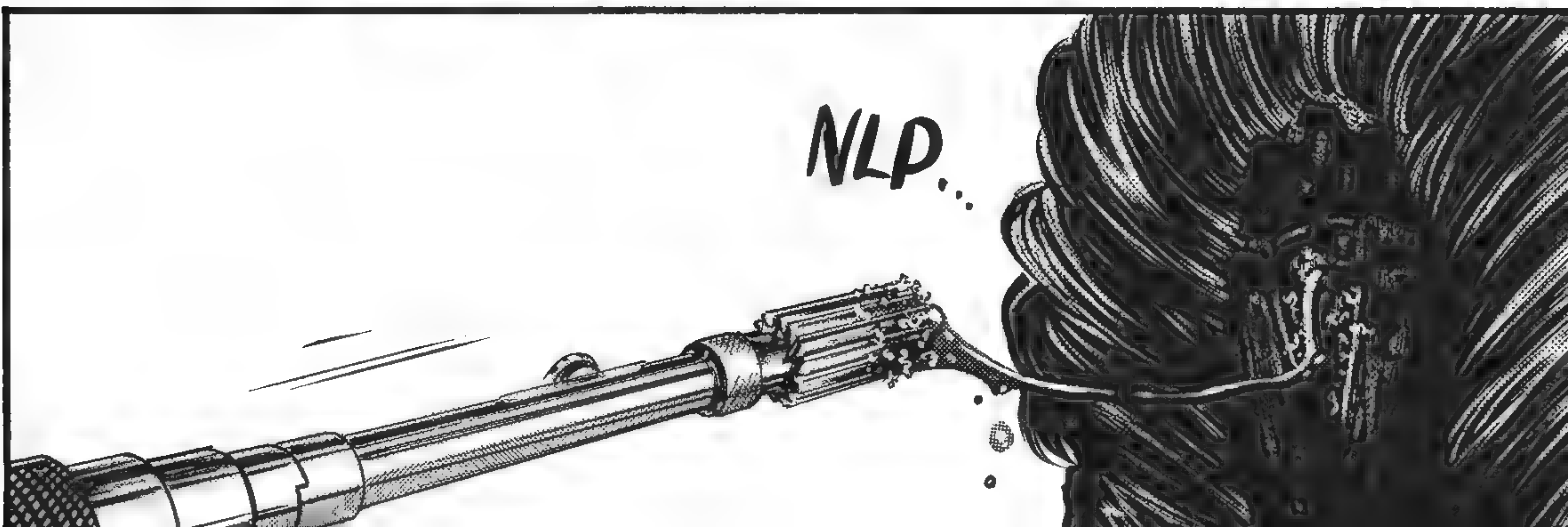
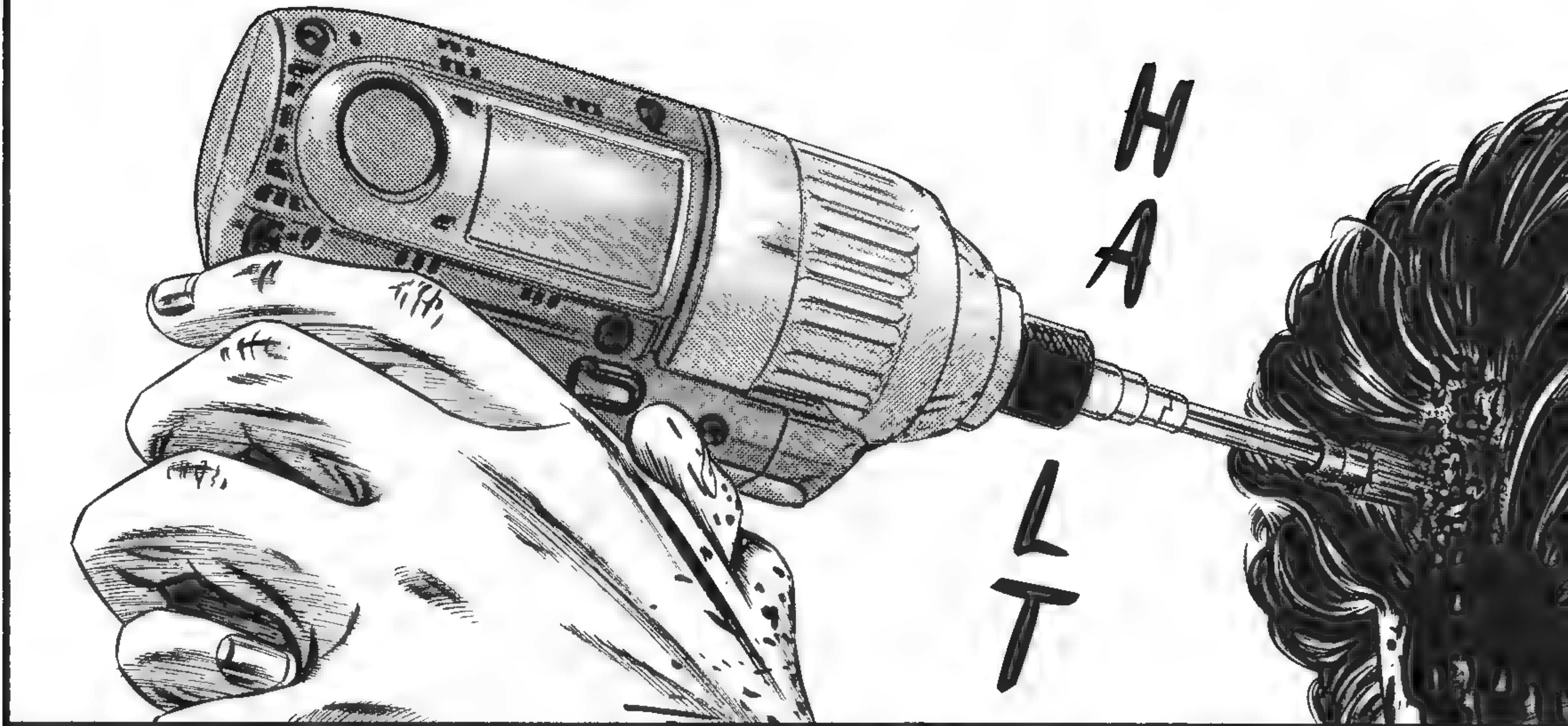








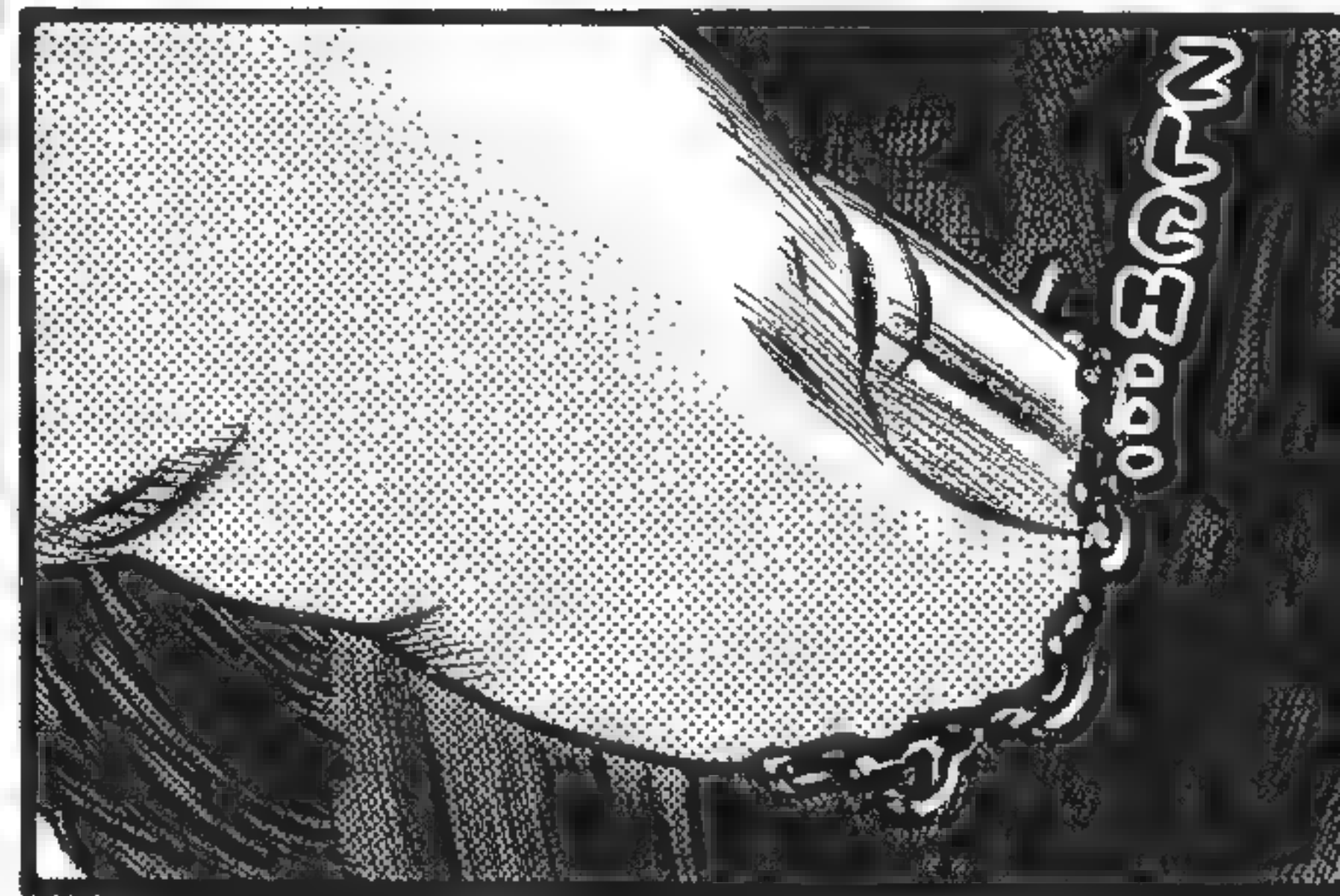




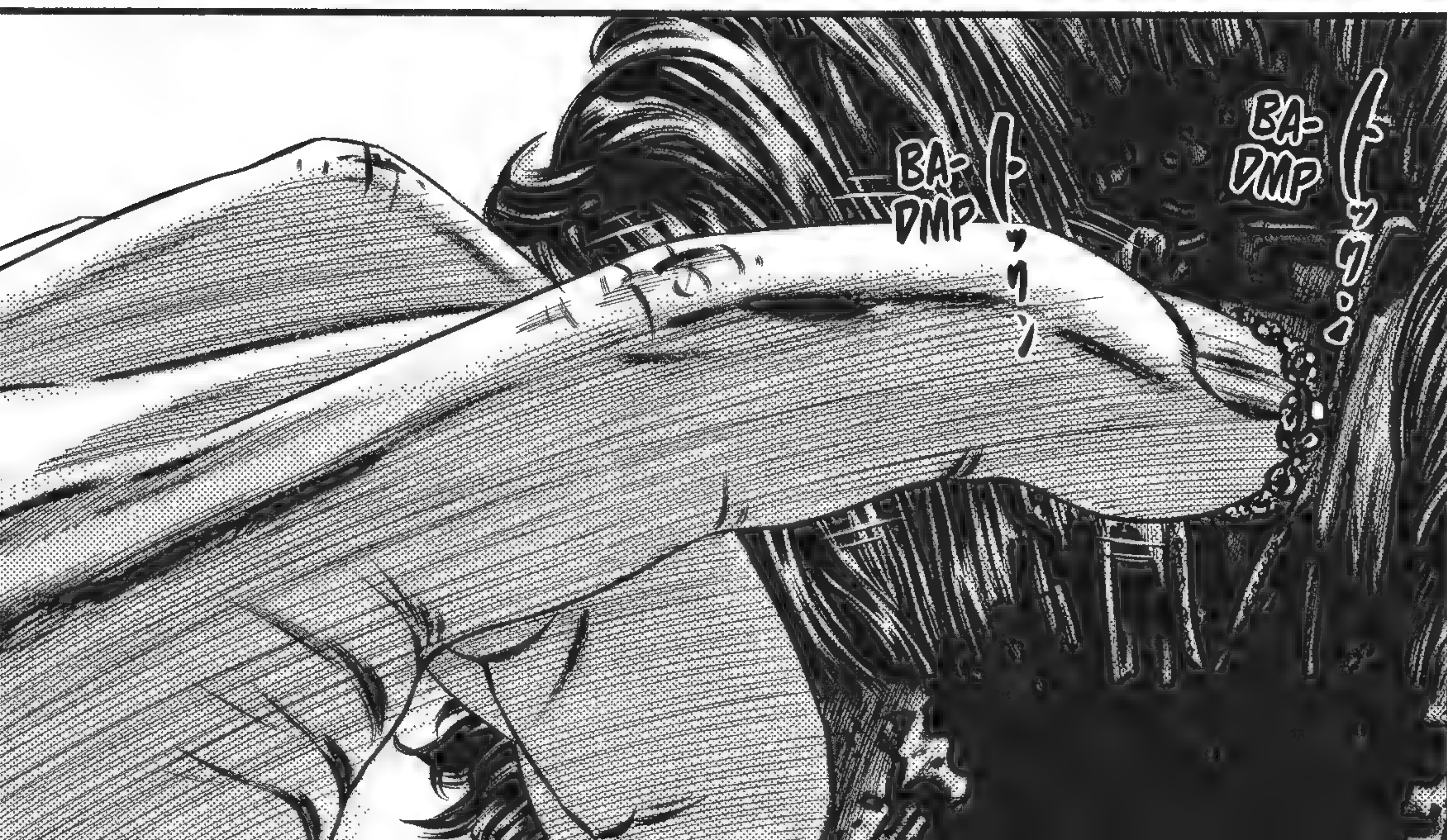




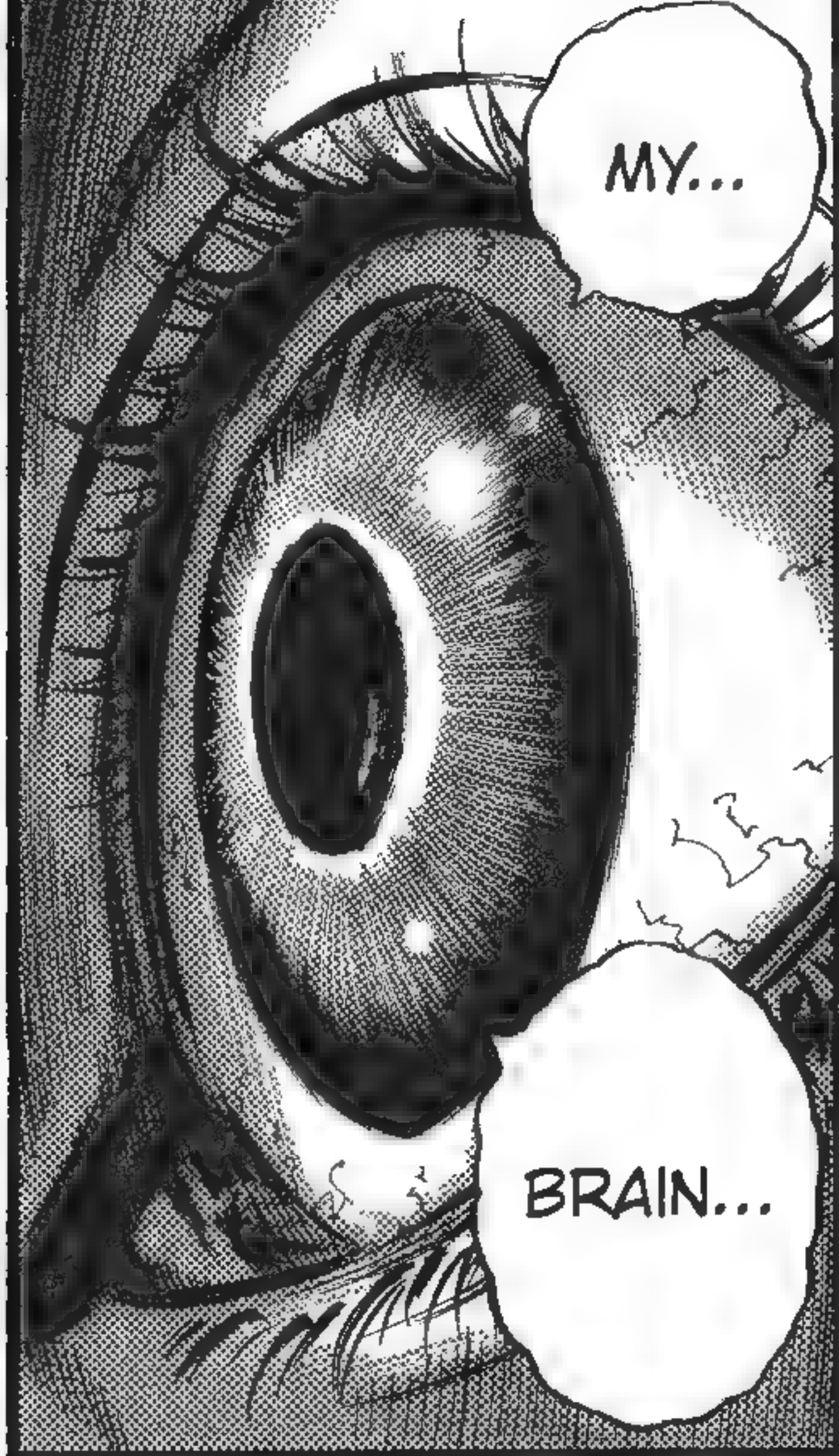












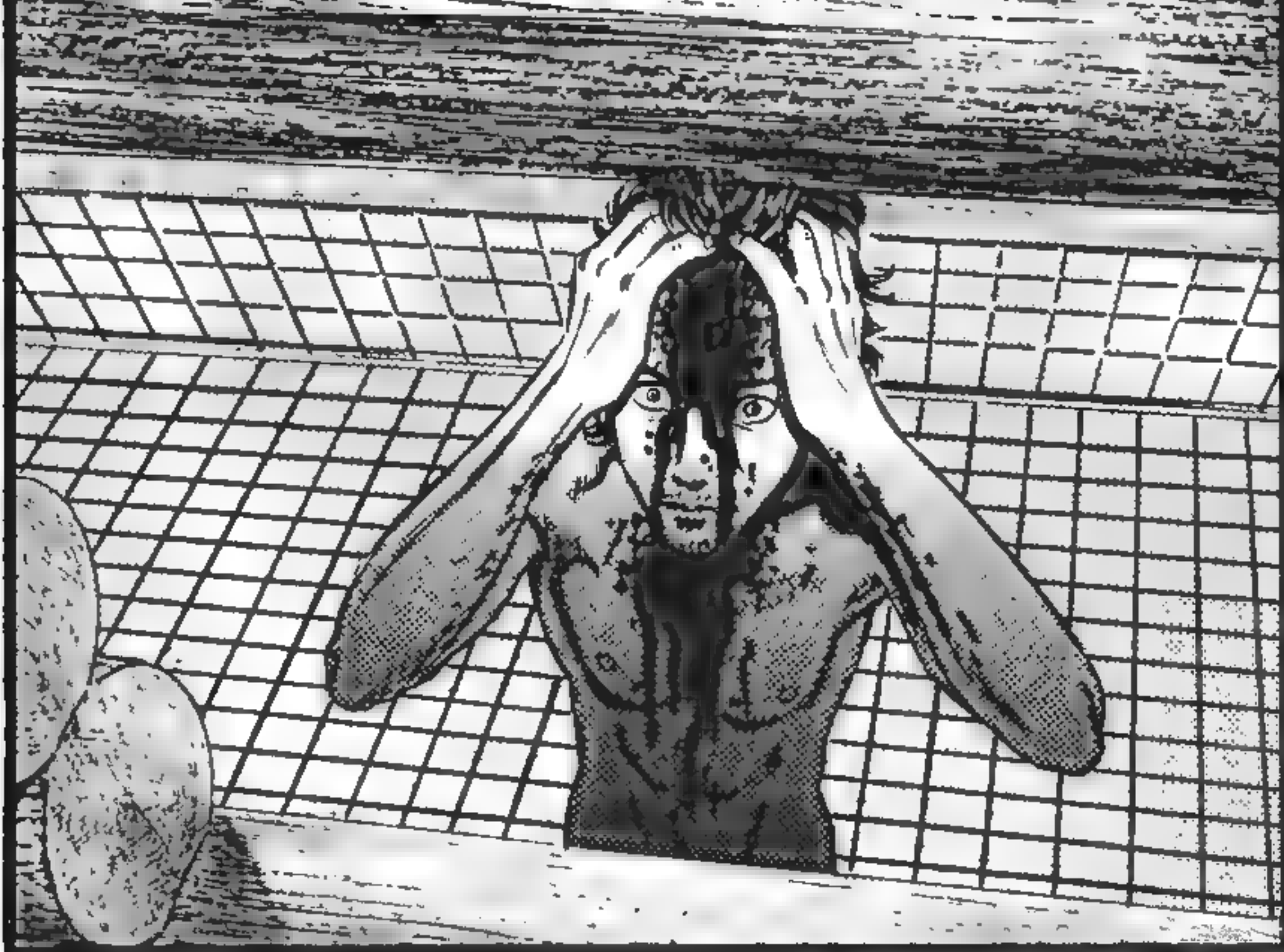


IT'S  
LIKE A  
BEATING  
HEART...

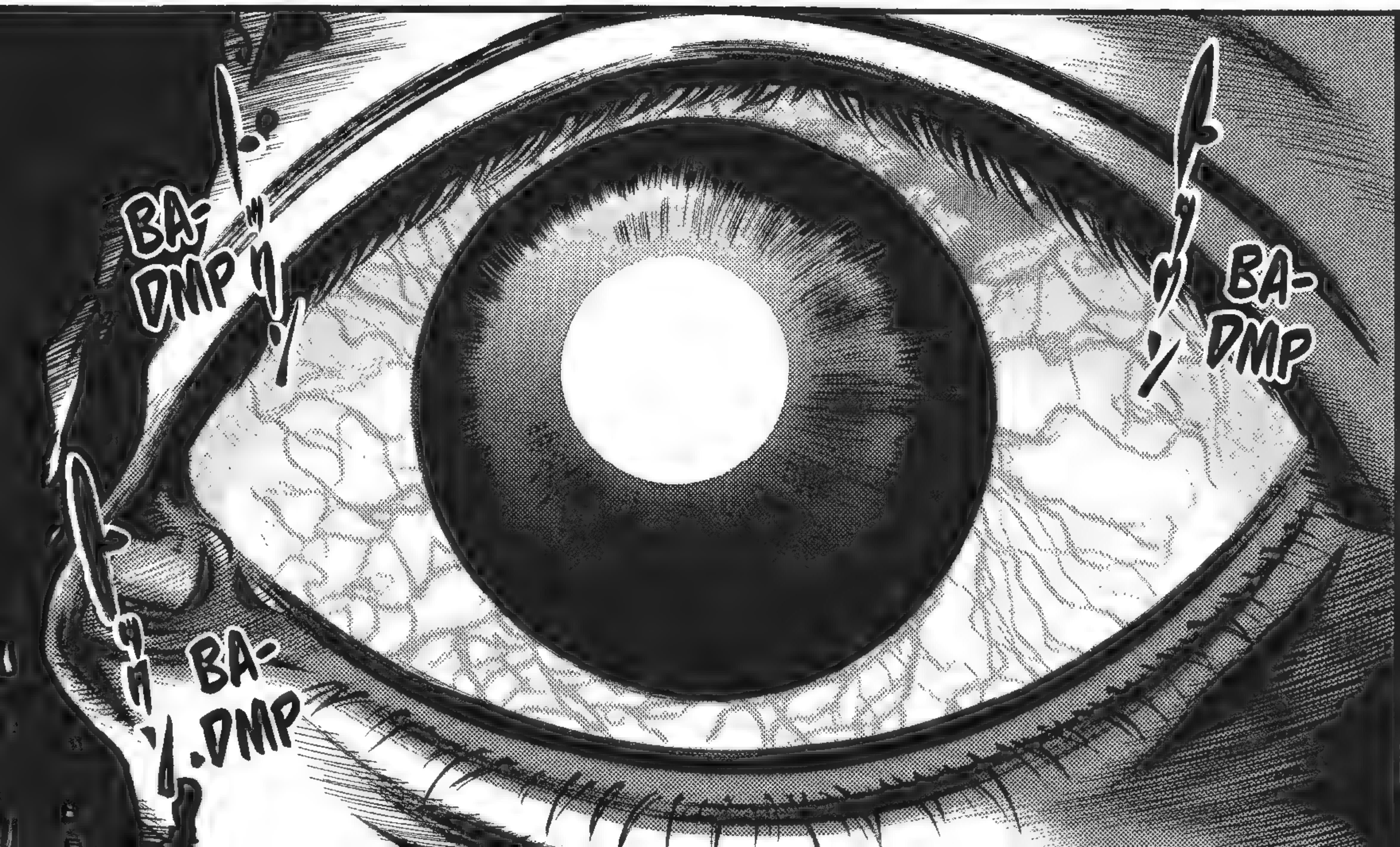
THROBBING  
WITH LIFE!



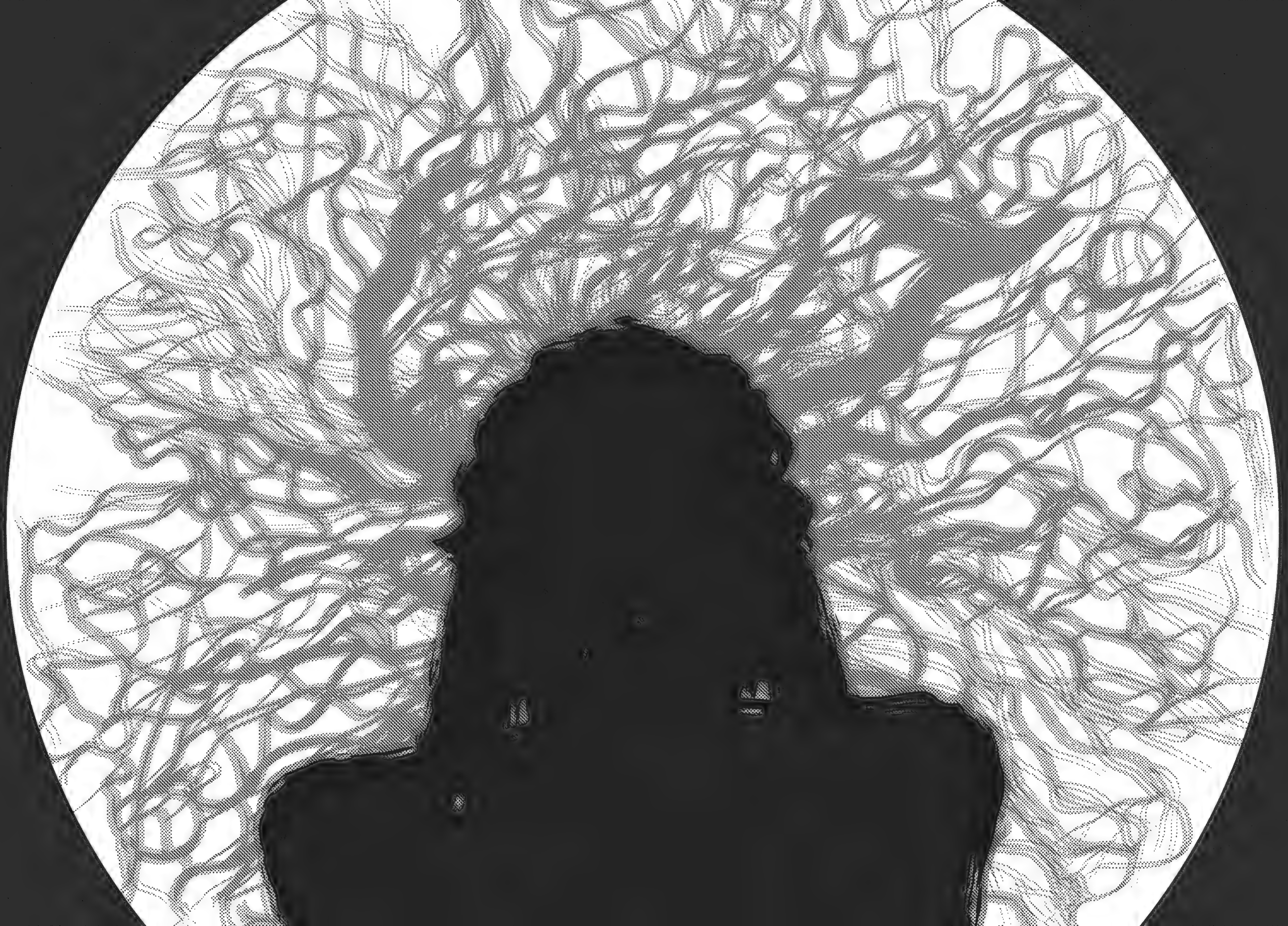




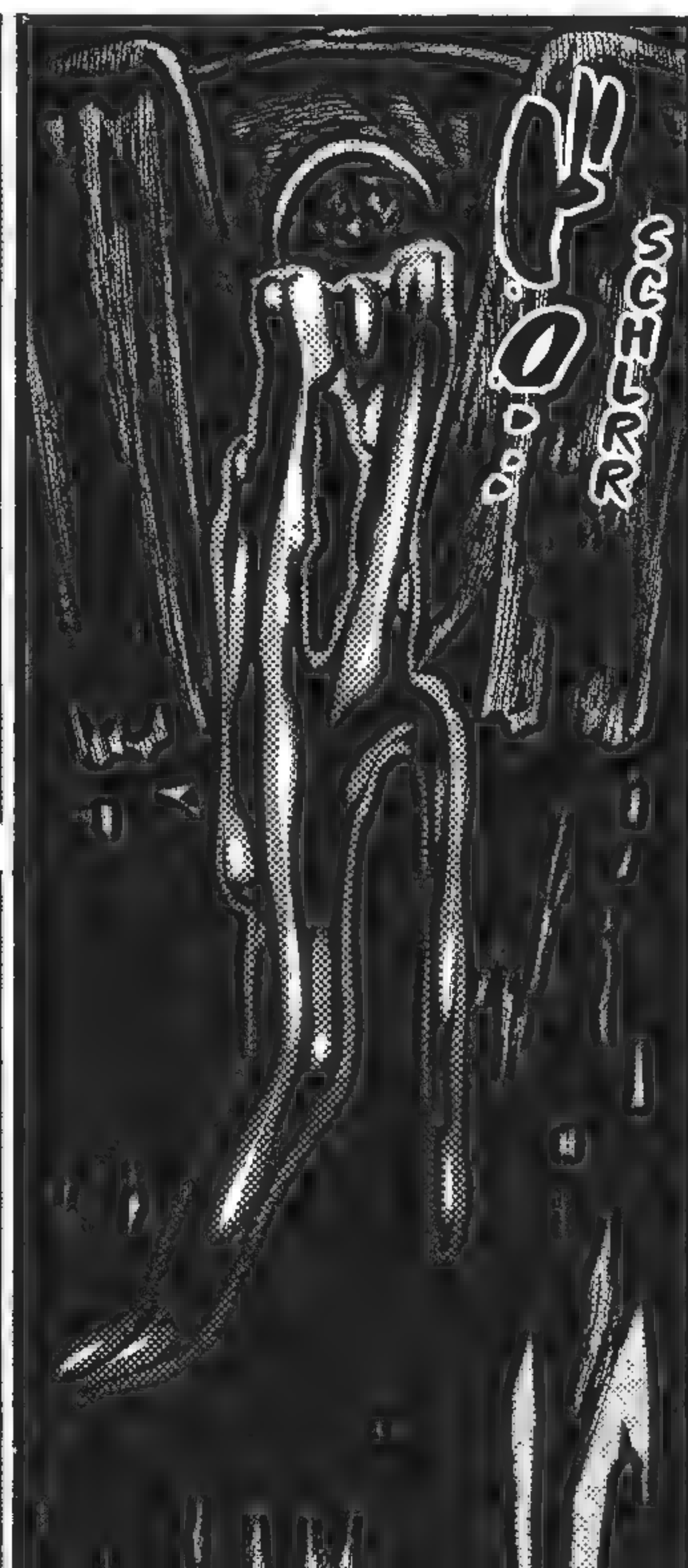
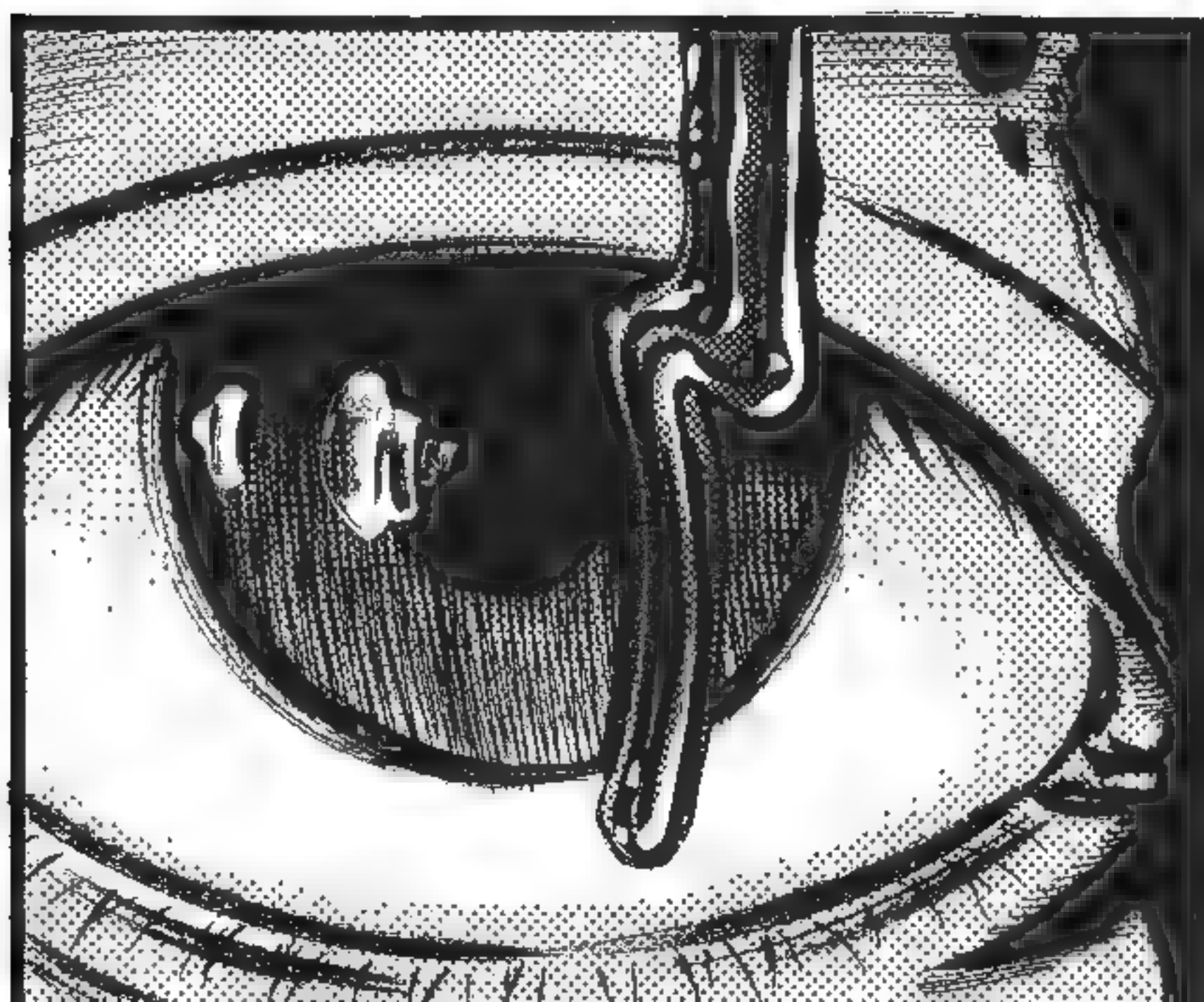








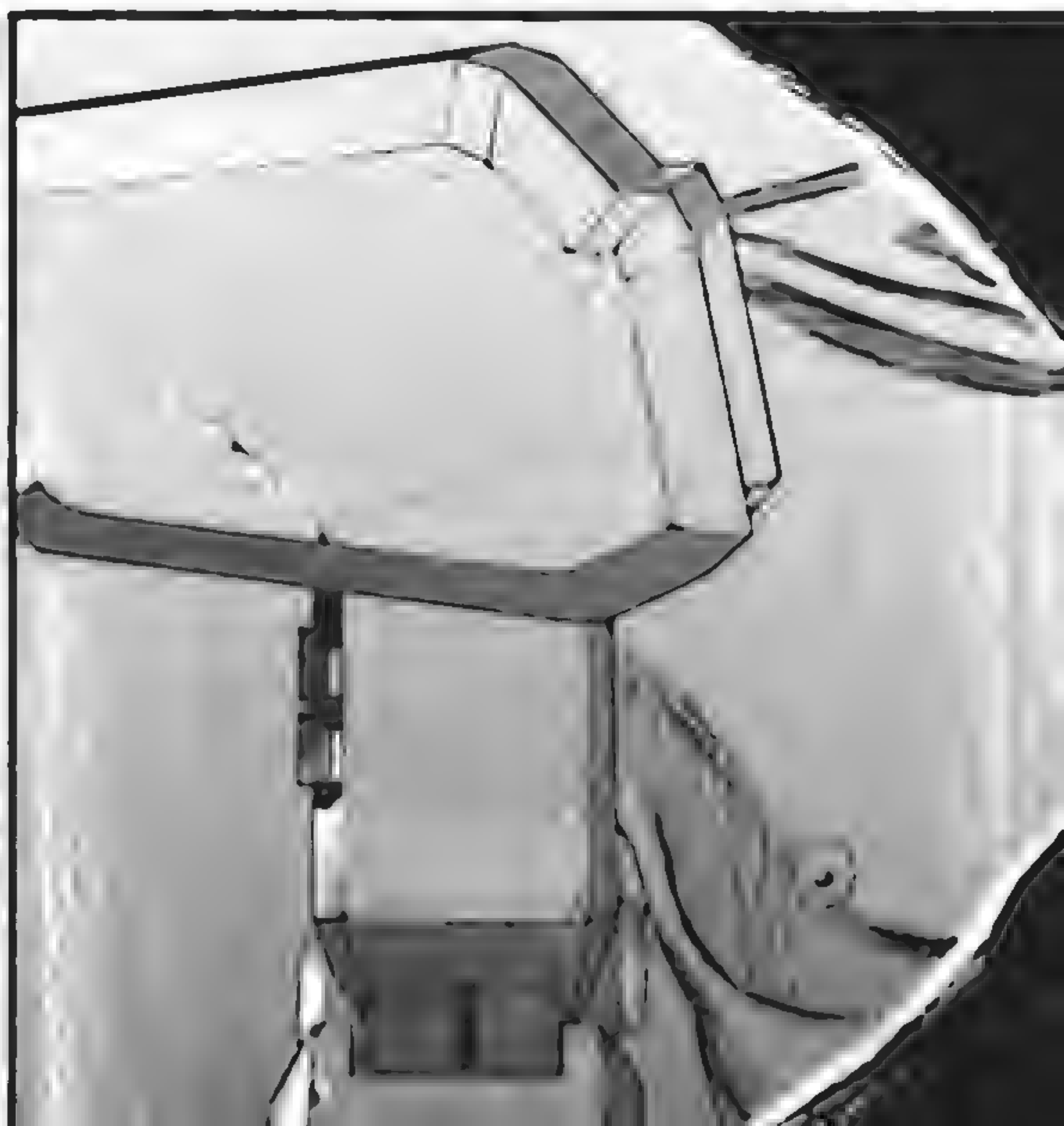
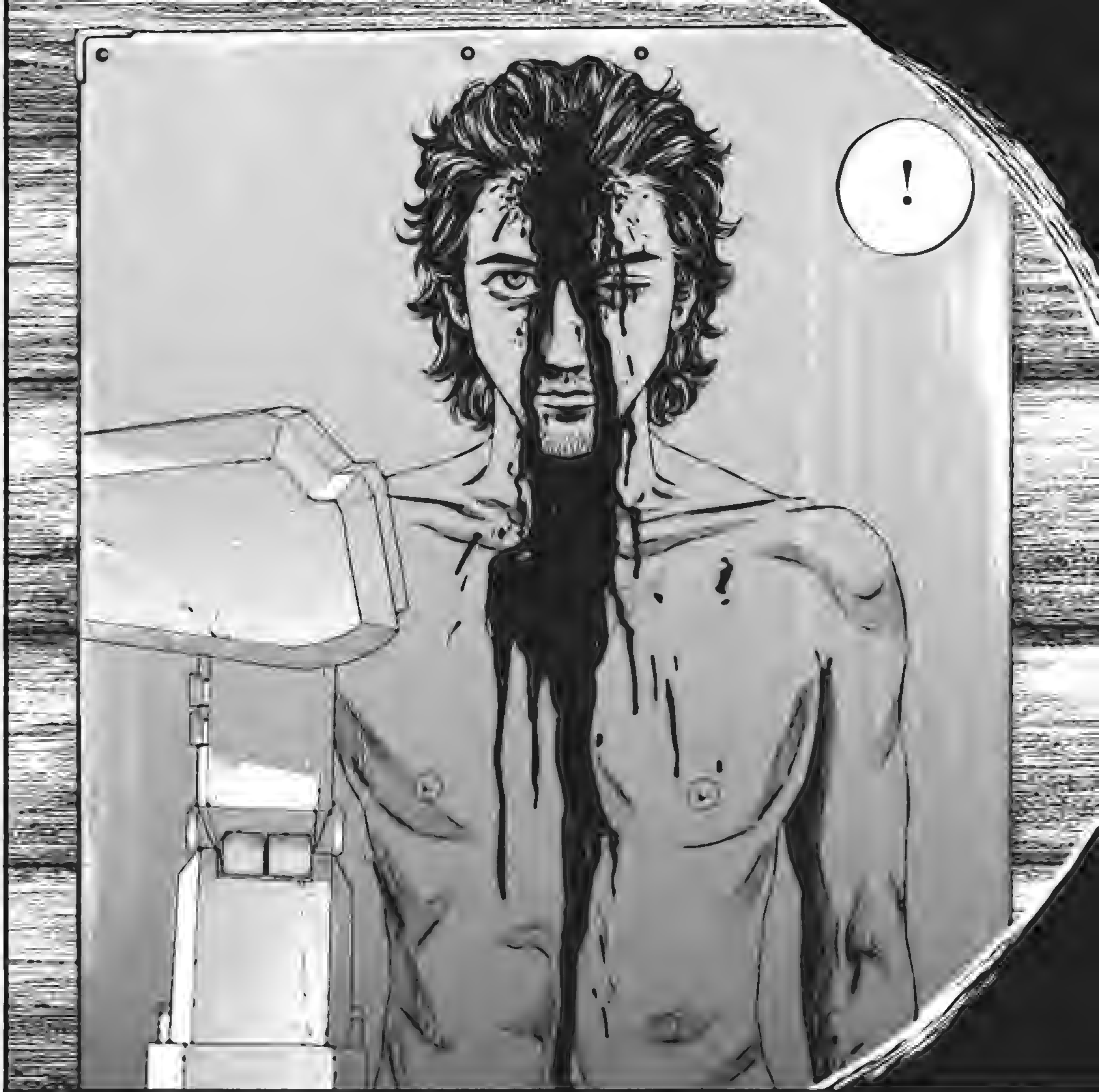




















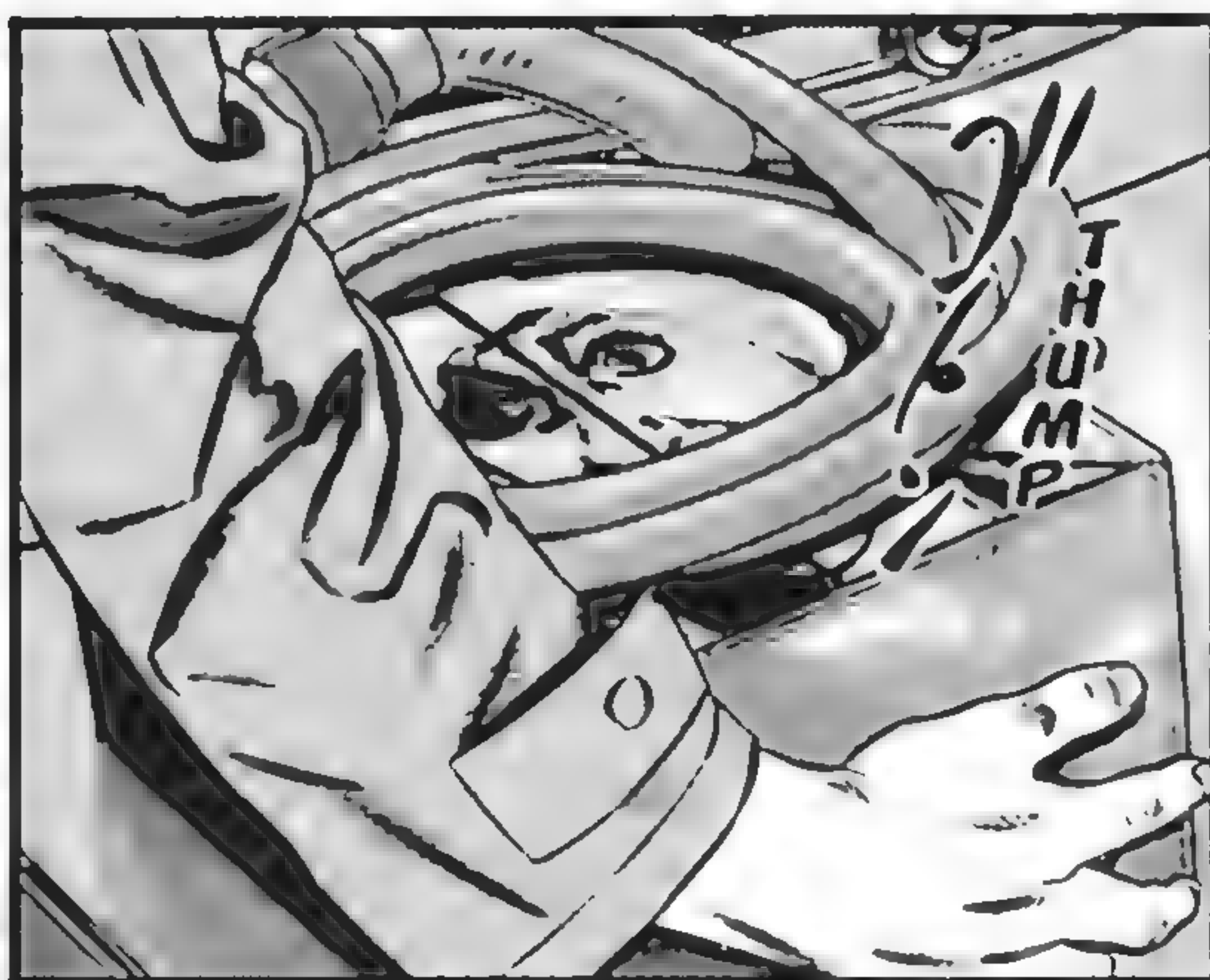




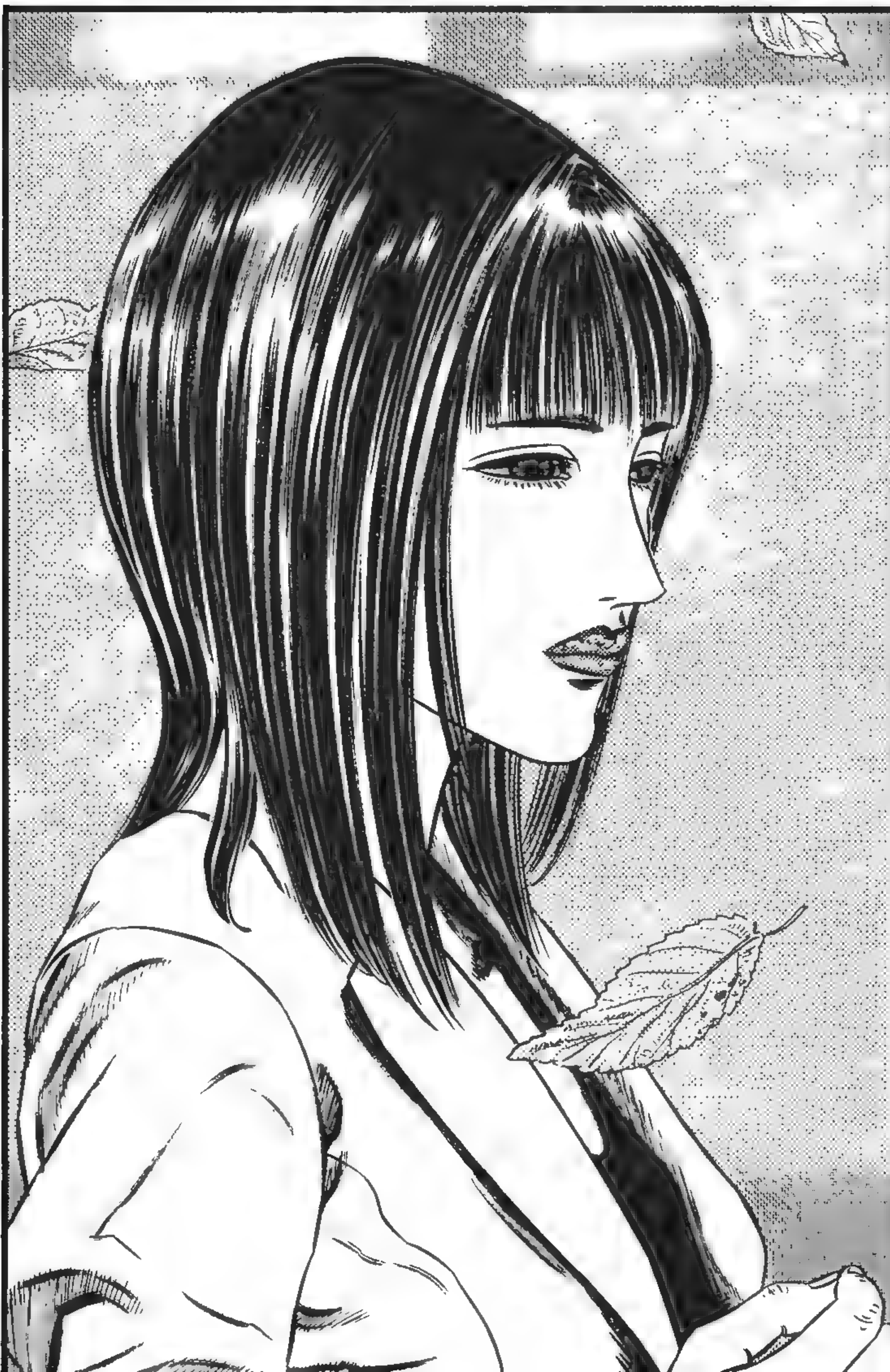
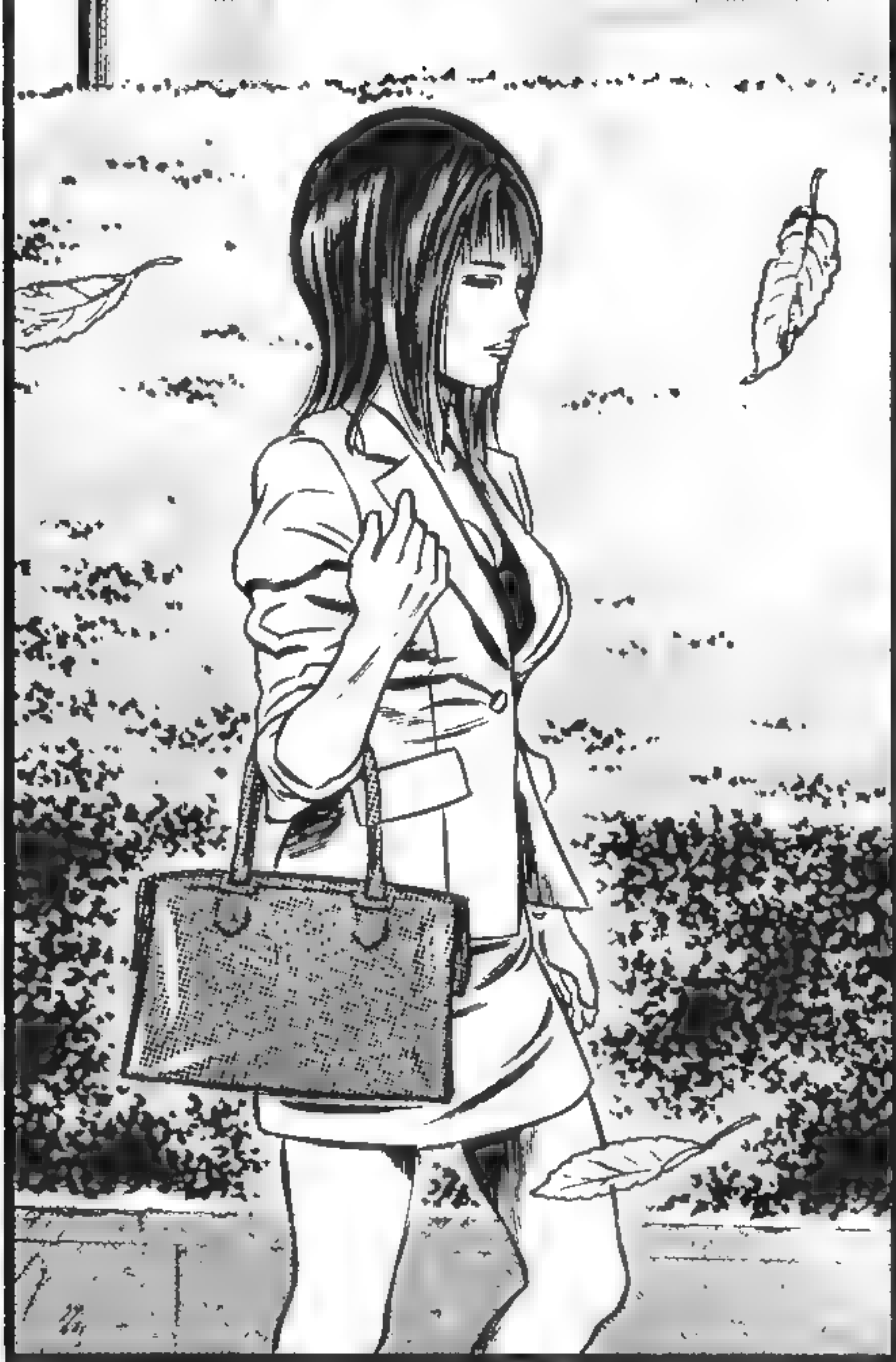




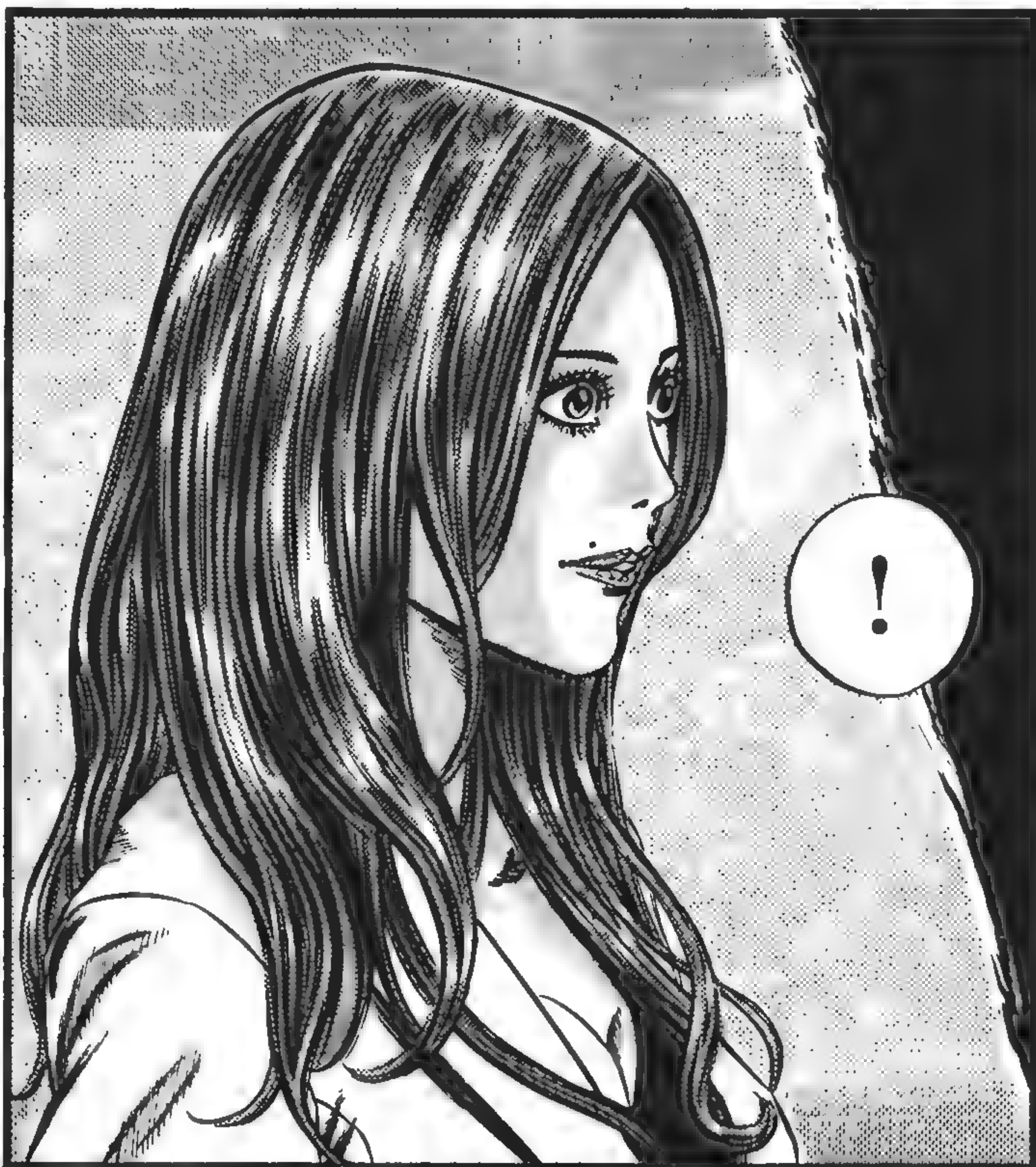




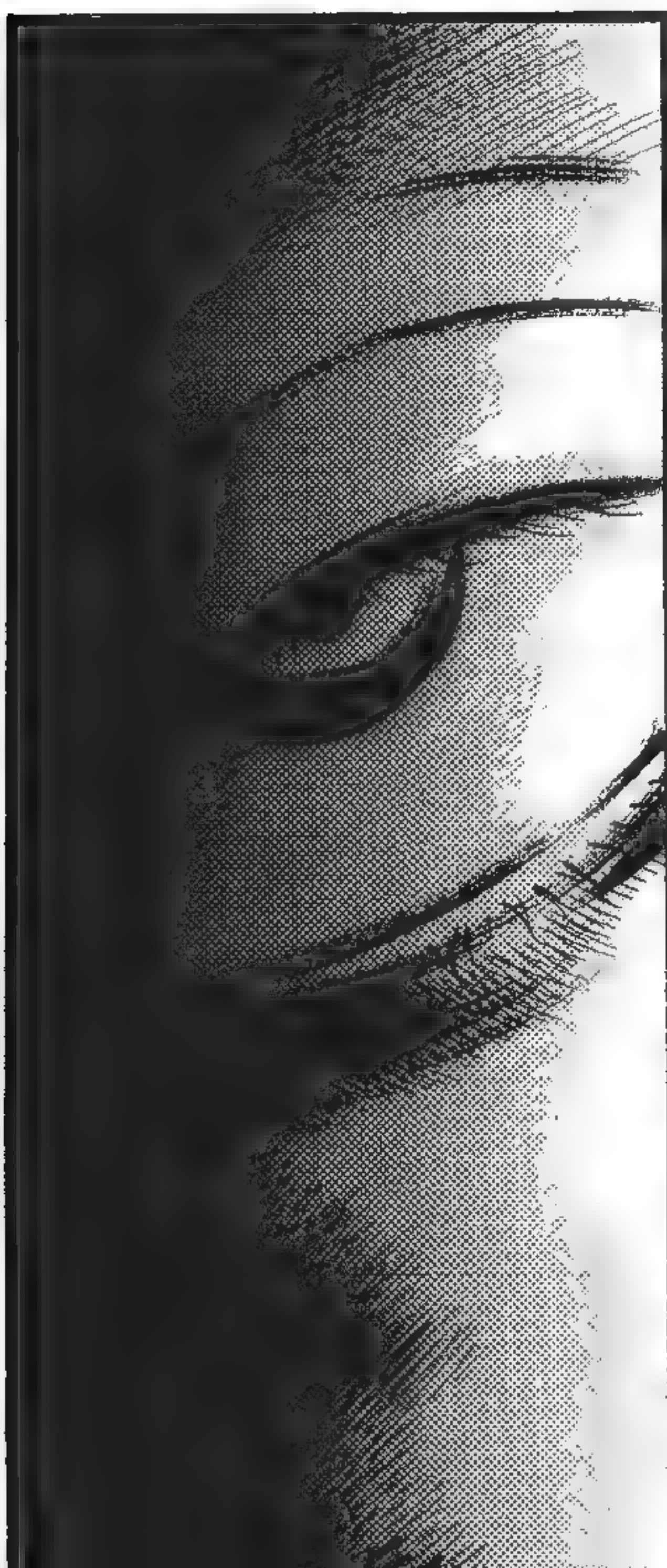




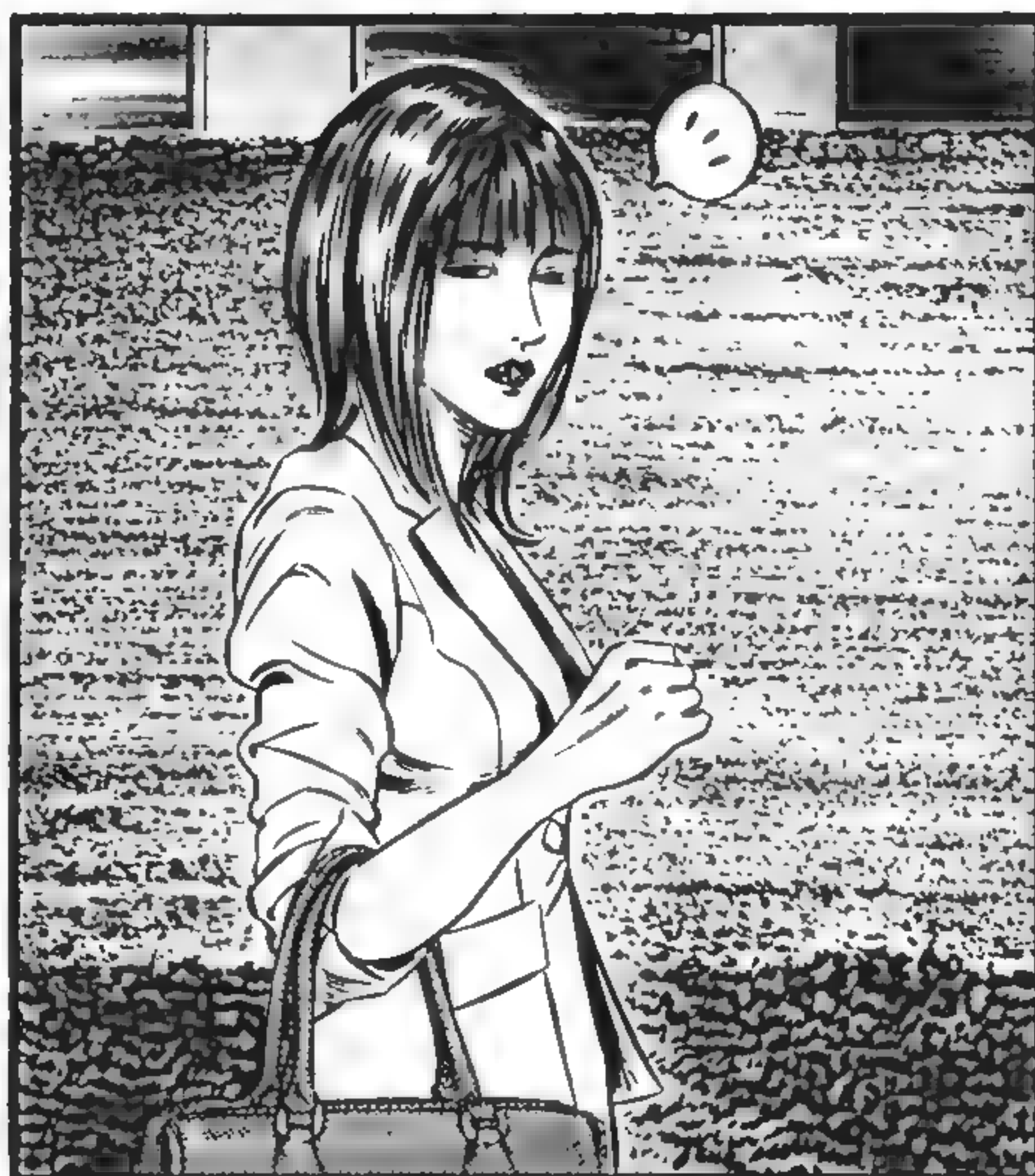
















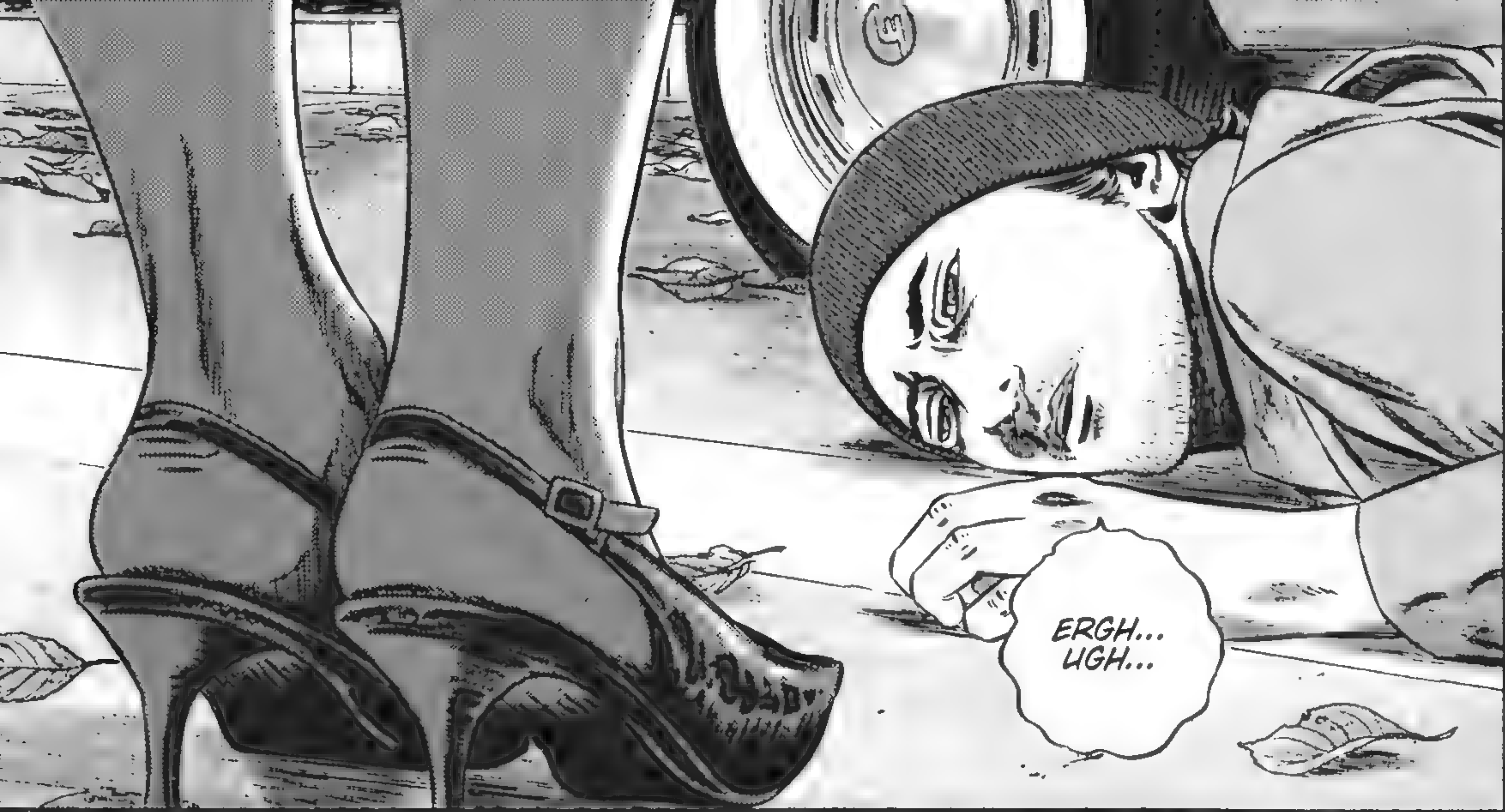




























IT'S  
BEEN A  
REALLY  
LONG  
TIME!

.....



OH...



HUH?



I'M  
SORRY...

BUT...  
WHAT'S  
YOUR  
NAME  
AGAIN?



I DON'T  
REMEMBER  
ANYONE  
WITH THAT  
NAME...

.....  
?



IT'S  
OKAY. I'M  
MAKIMURA  
YUKI.









BUT YOU'RE  
CLEARLY  
HEADING  
INTO THAT  
HOTEL.



YOUR  
CHILDHOOD  
HOME...?



YIKES. THAT  
WOMAN LIES  
LIKE A RUG.



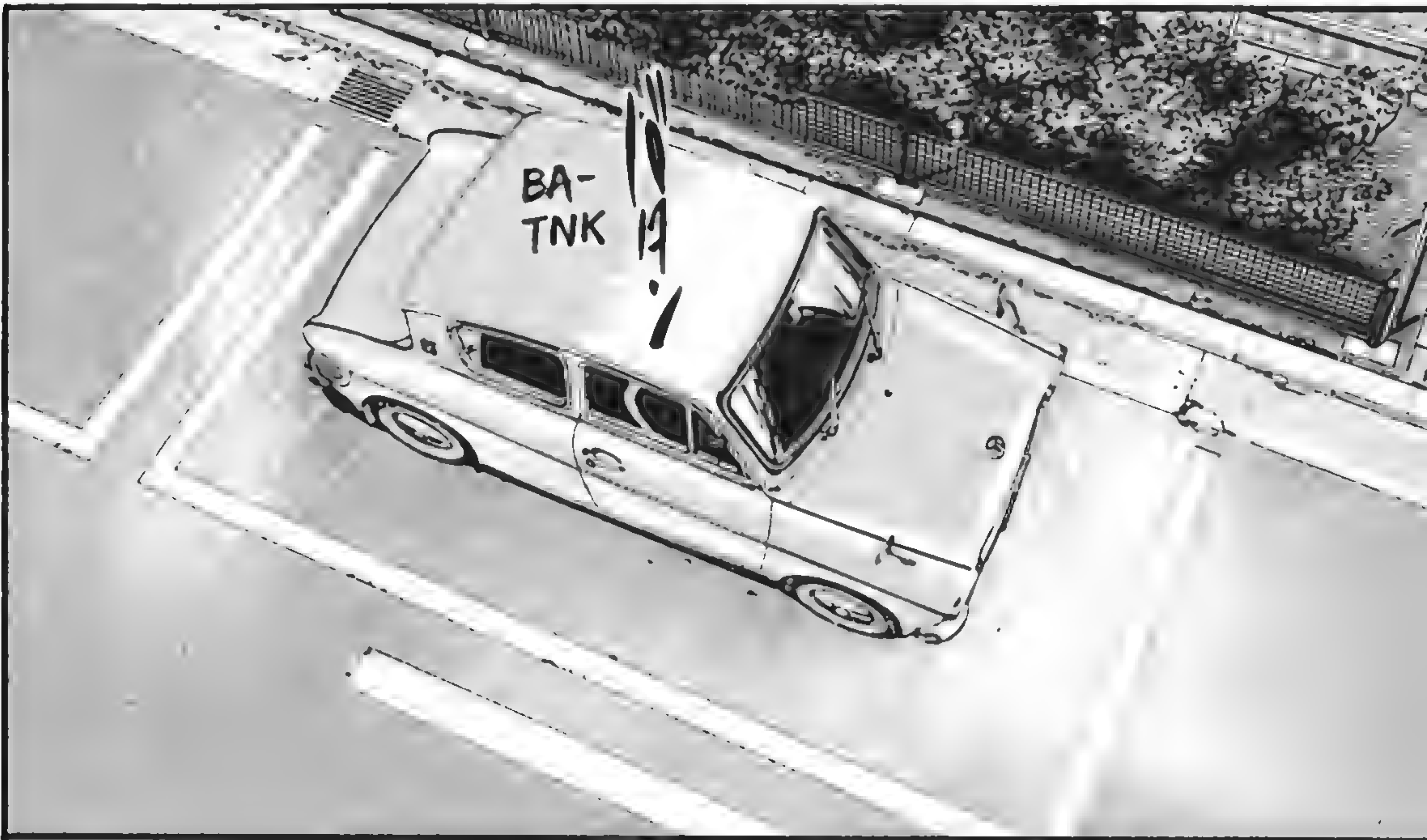
I THINK I  
REMEMBER  
NOW.

THERE  
WAS A  
GIRL LIKE  
THAT,  
WASN'T  
THERE?



WAIT...









RMB

RMB

7

RMB

RMB

RMB







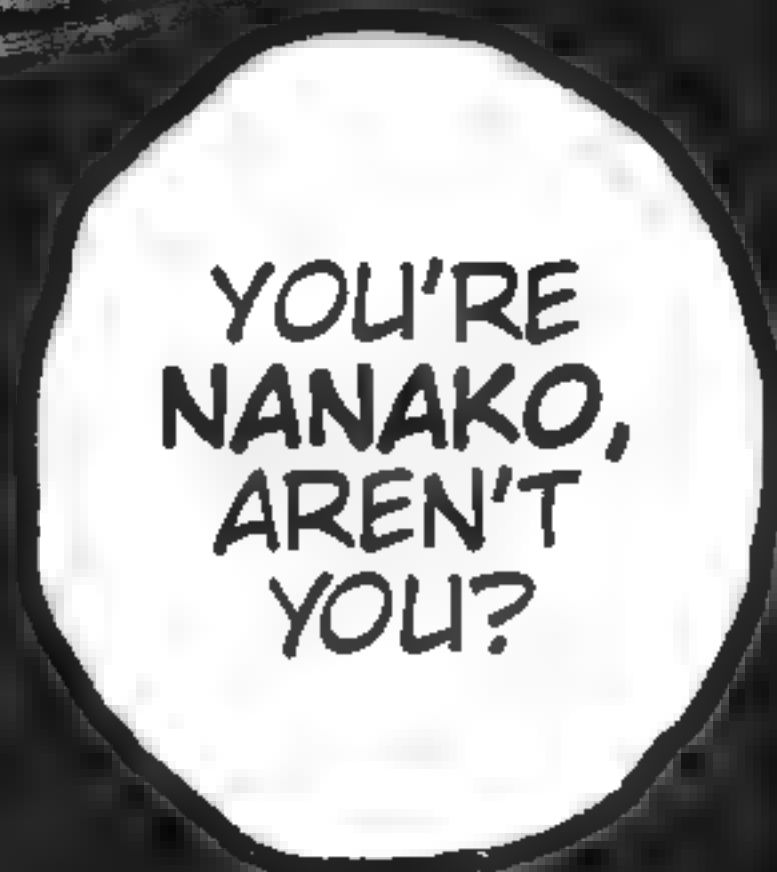
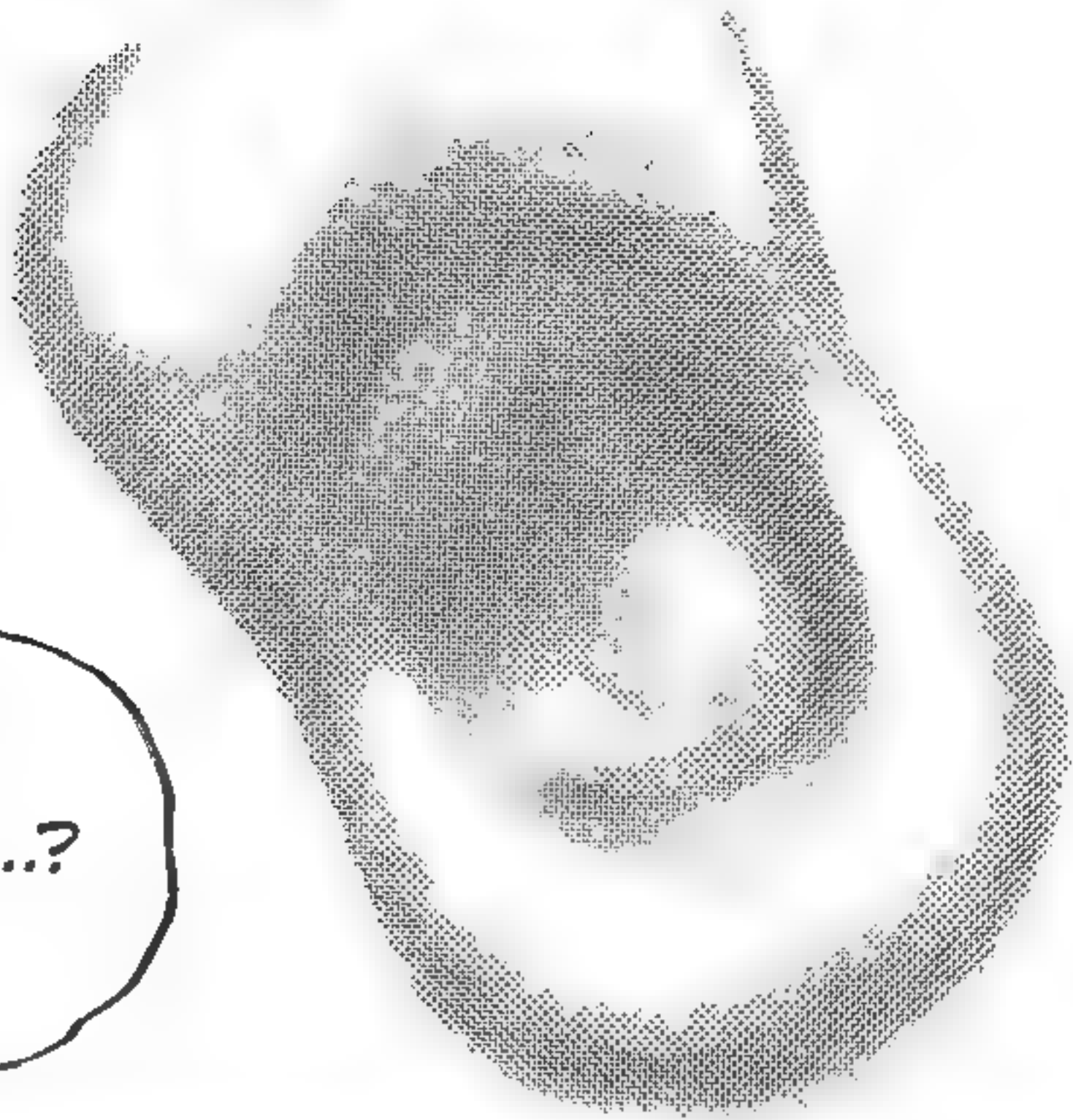


WHO  
ARE  
YOU?



...HDA...

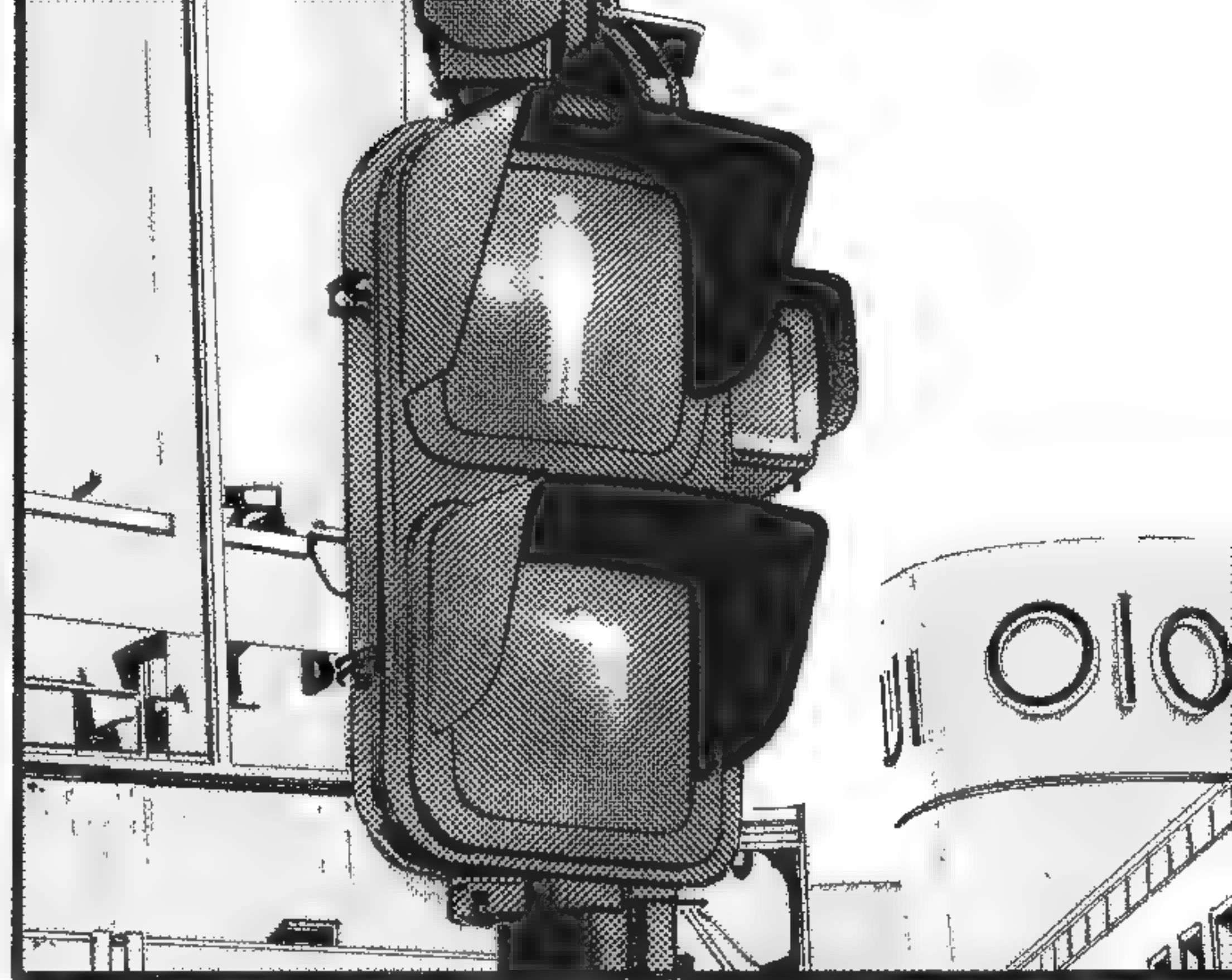




















IT'S  
BACK TO  
NORMAL.



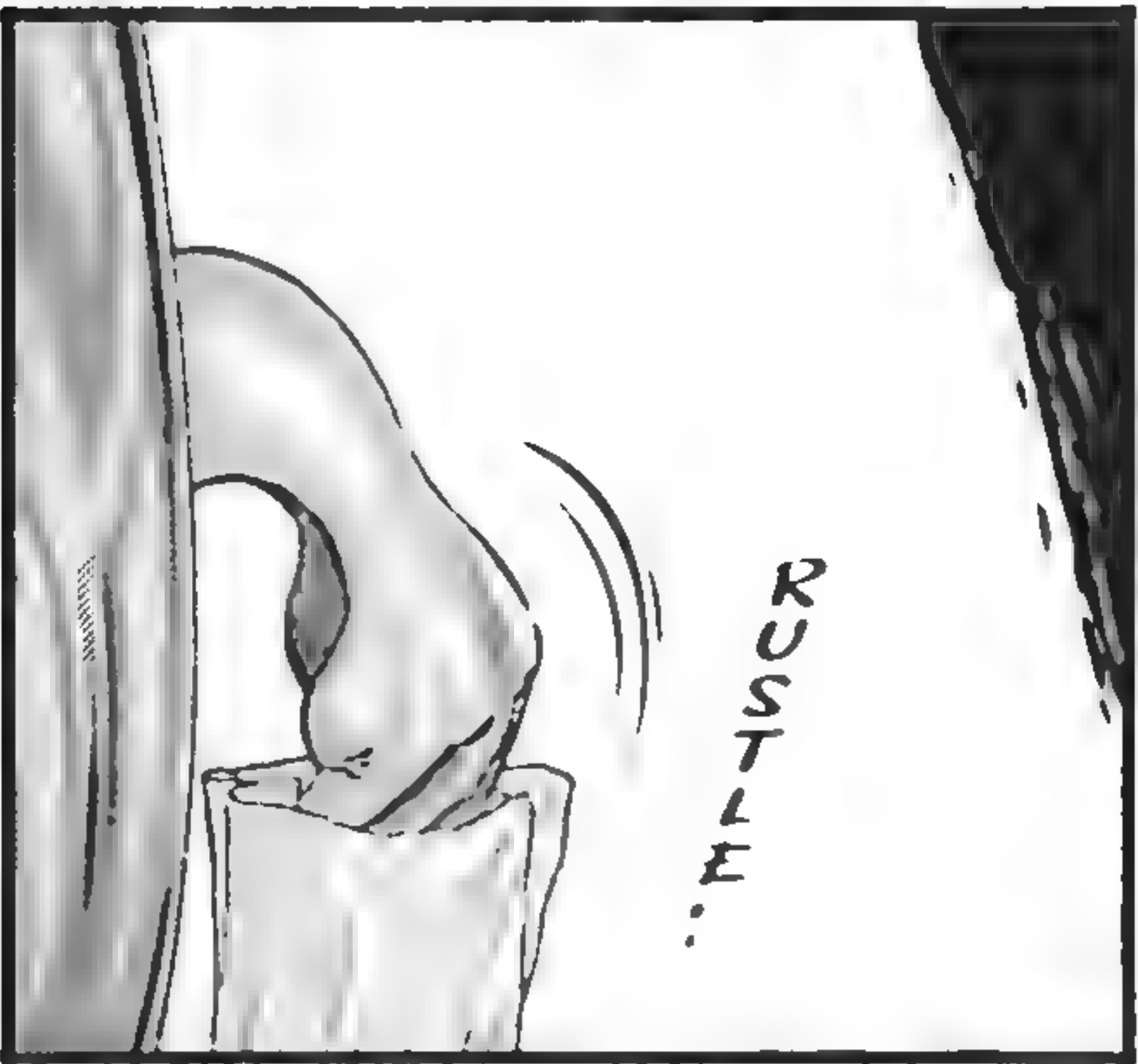
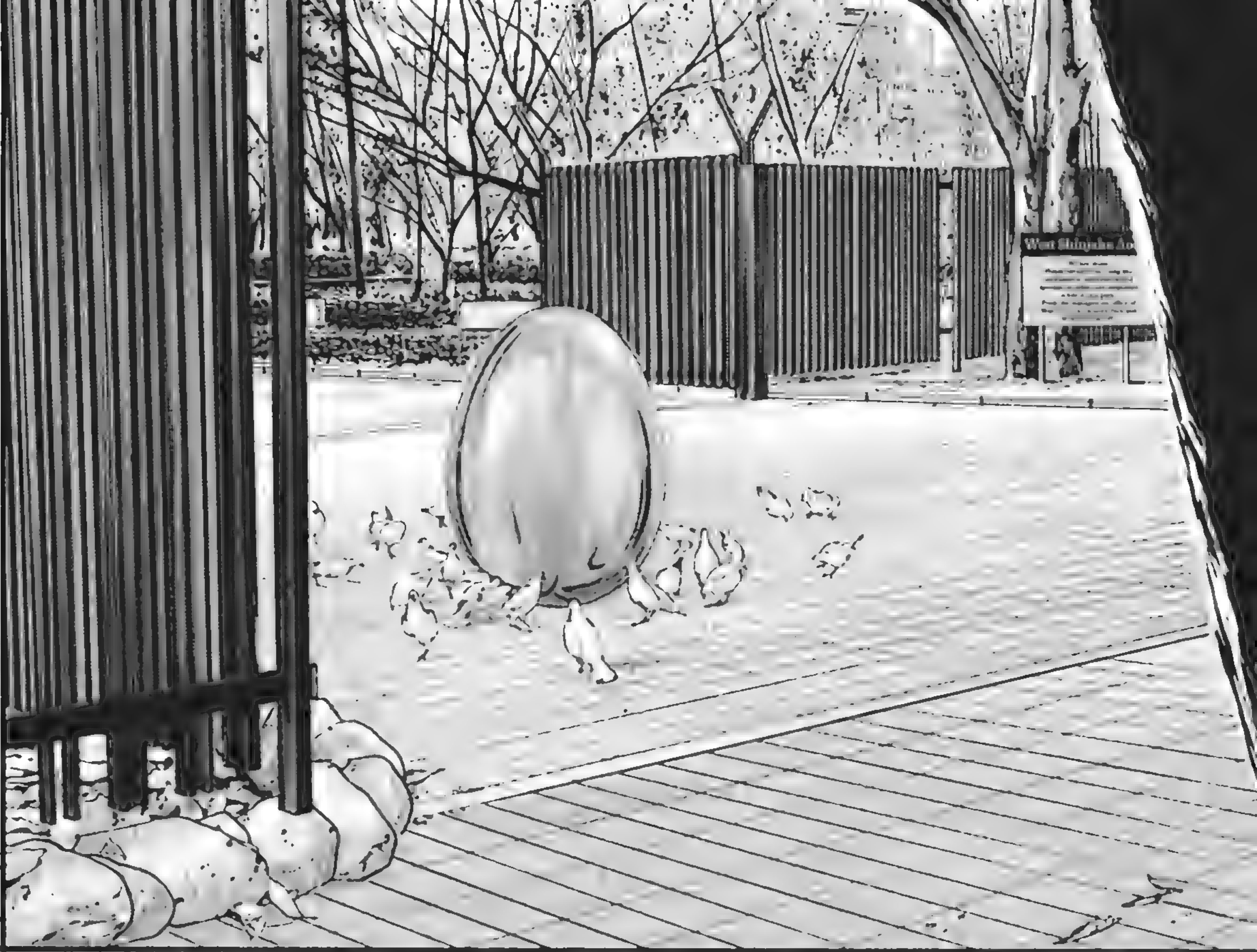




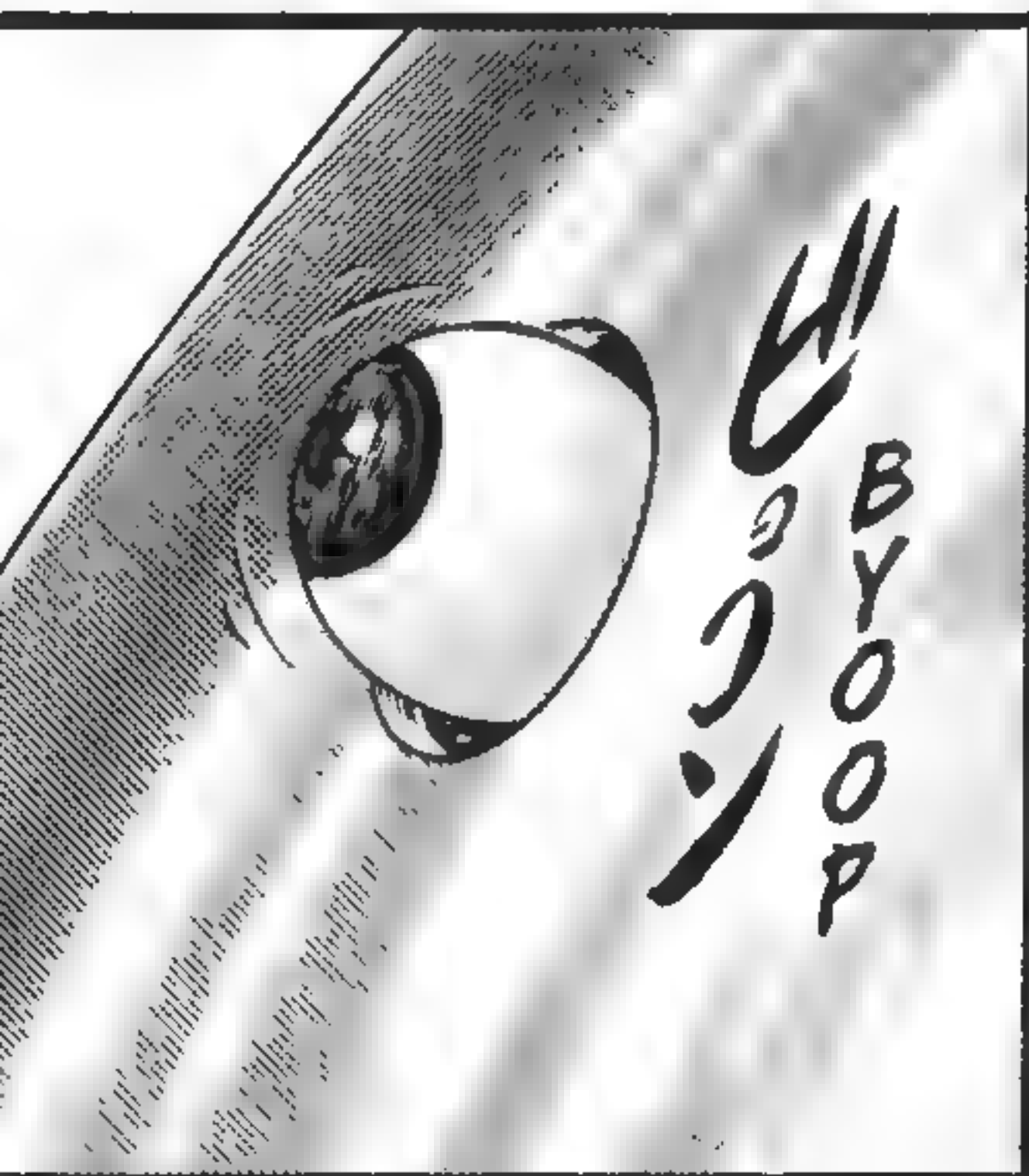
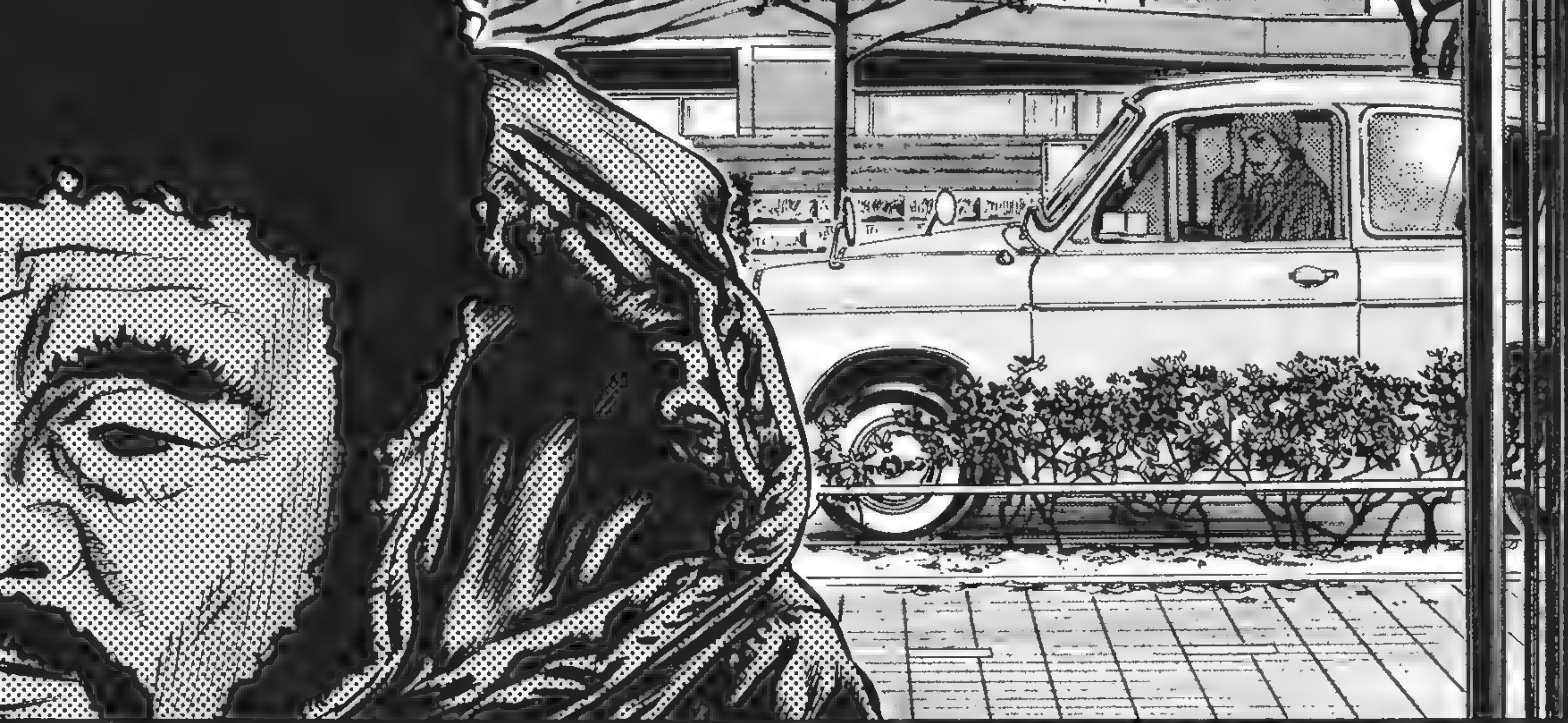




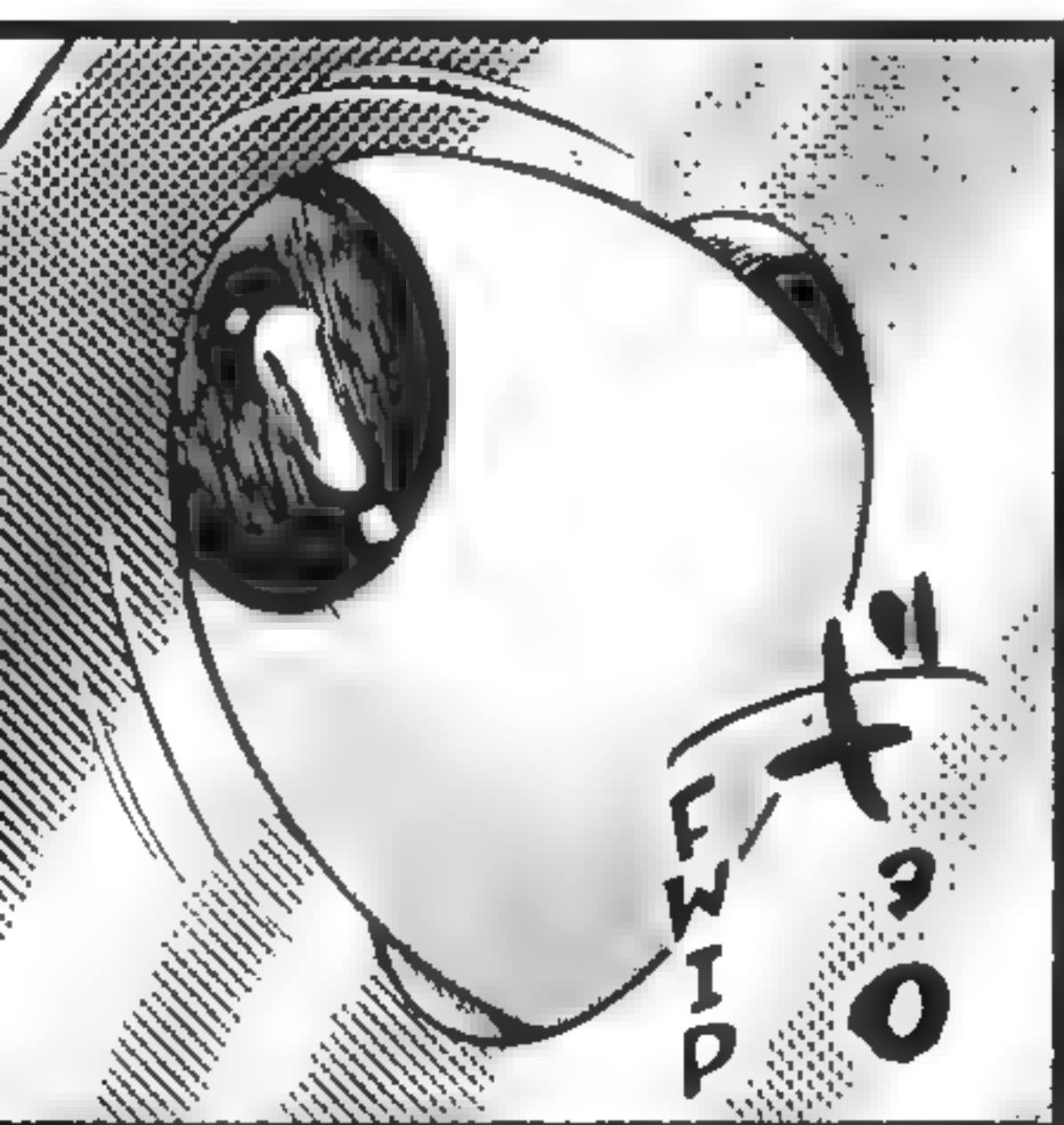
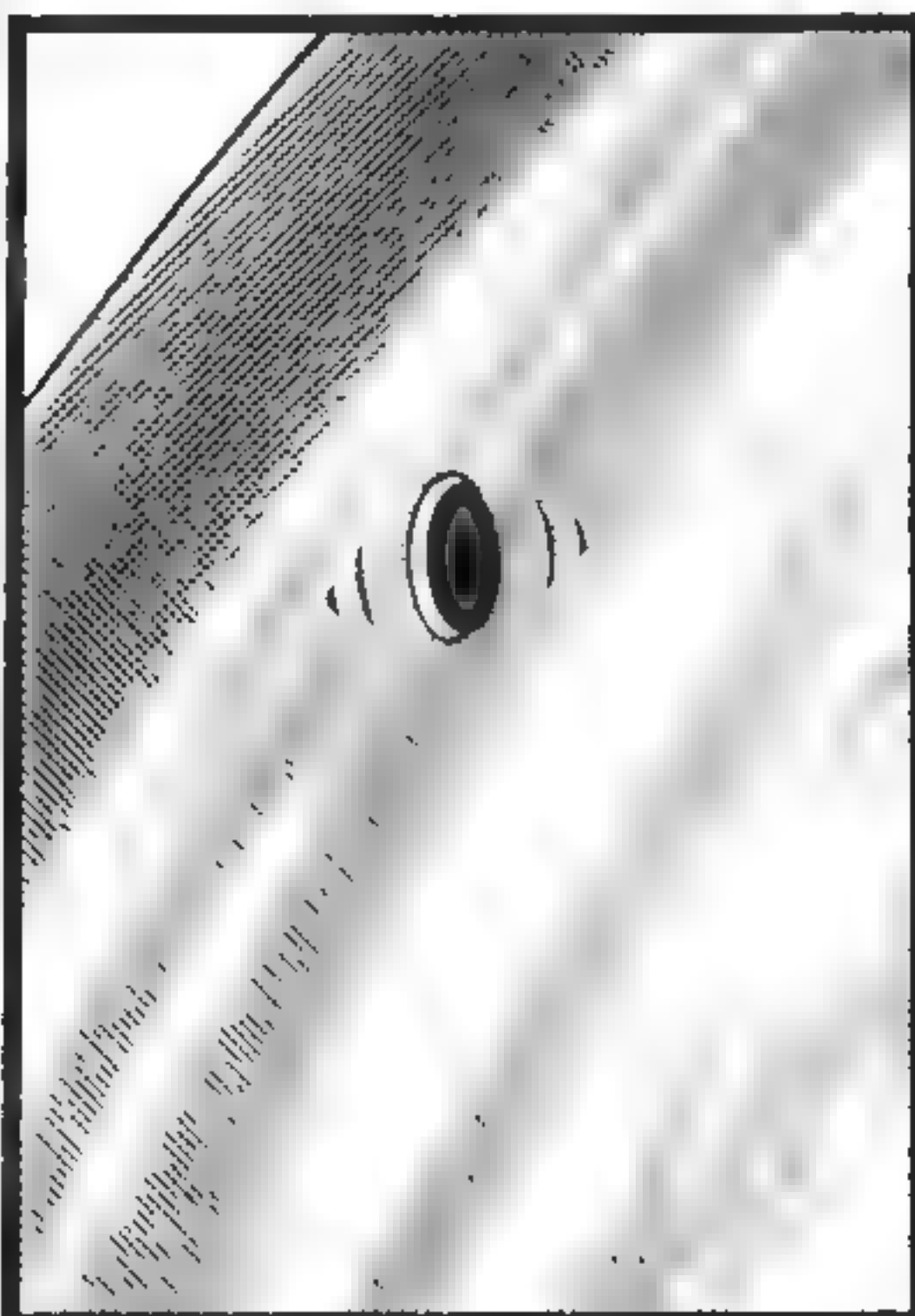




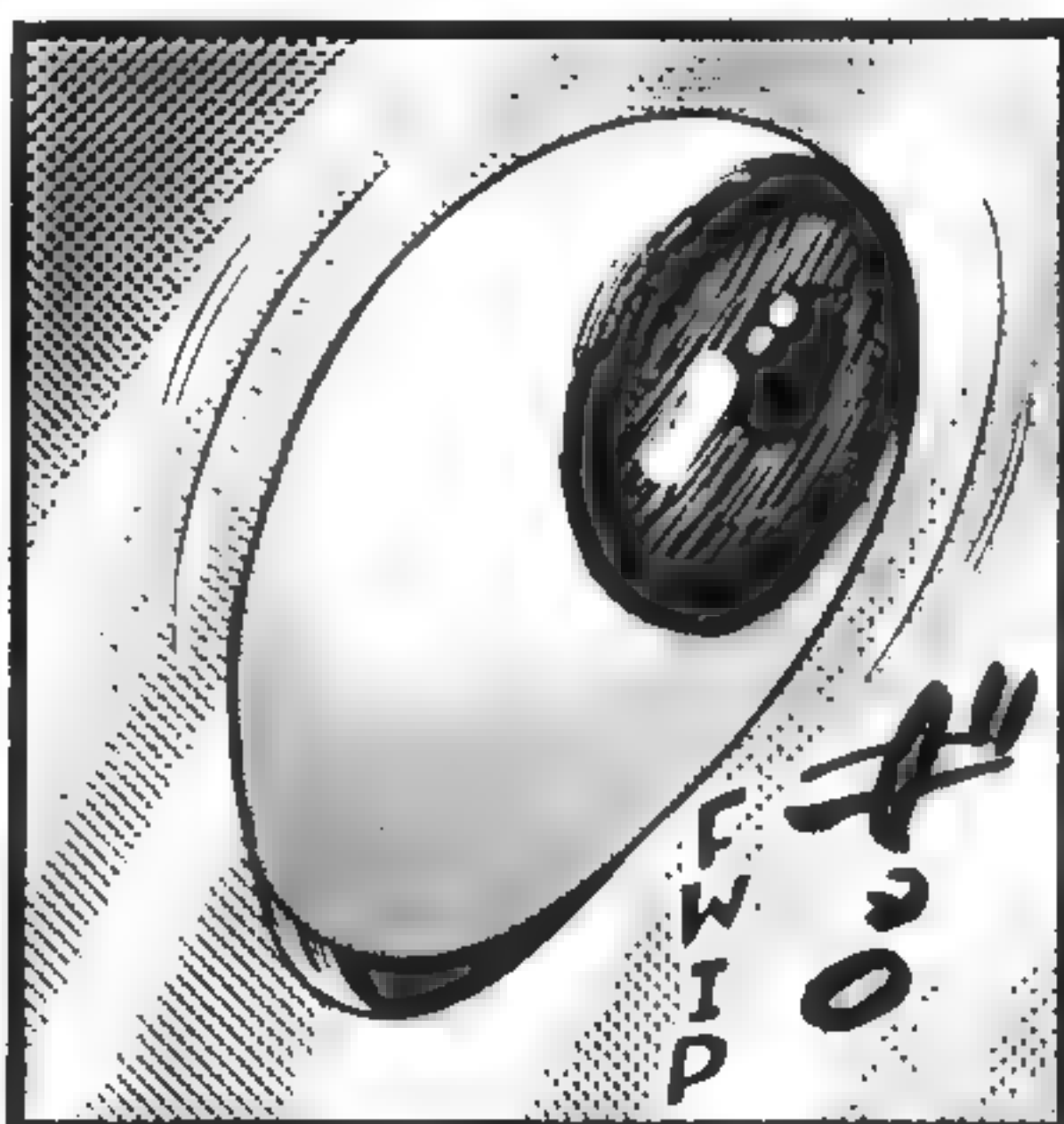




BYOOP  
BYOOP  
BYOOP



FWIP  
FWIP  
FWIP



FWIP  
FWIP  
FWIP



I WONDER  
WHAT'S  
INSIDE IT?

THERE'S  
THAT EGG  
AGAIN...



ONE OF  
THESE  
DAYS...

I'M GONNA  
BUST YOU  
OUT OF  
YOUR  
SHELL.



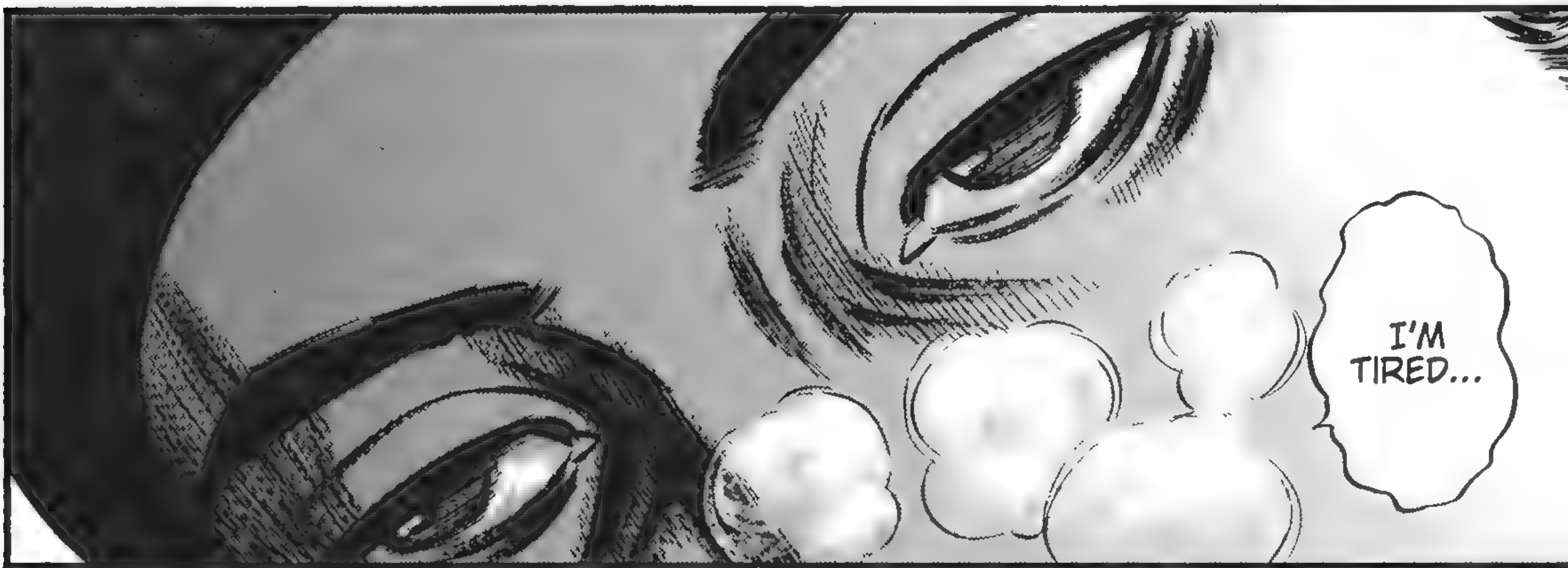
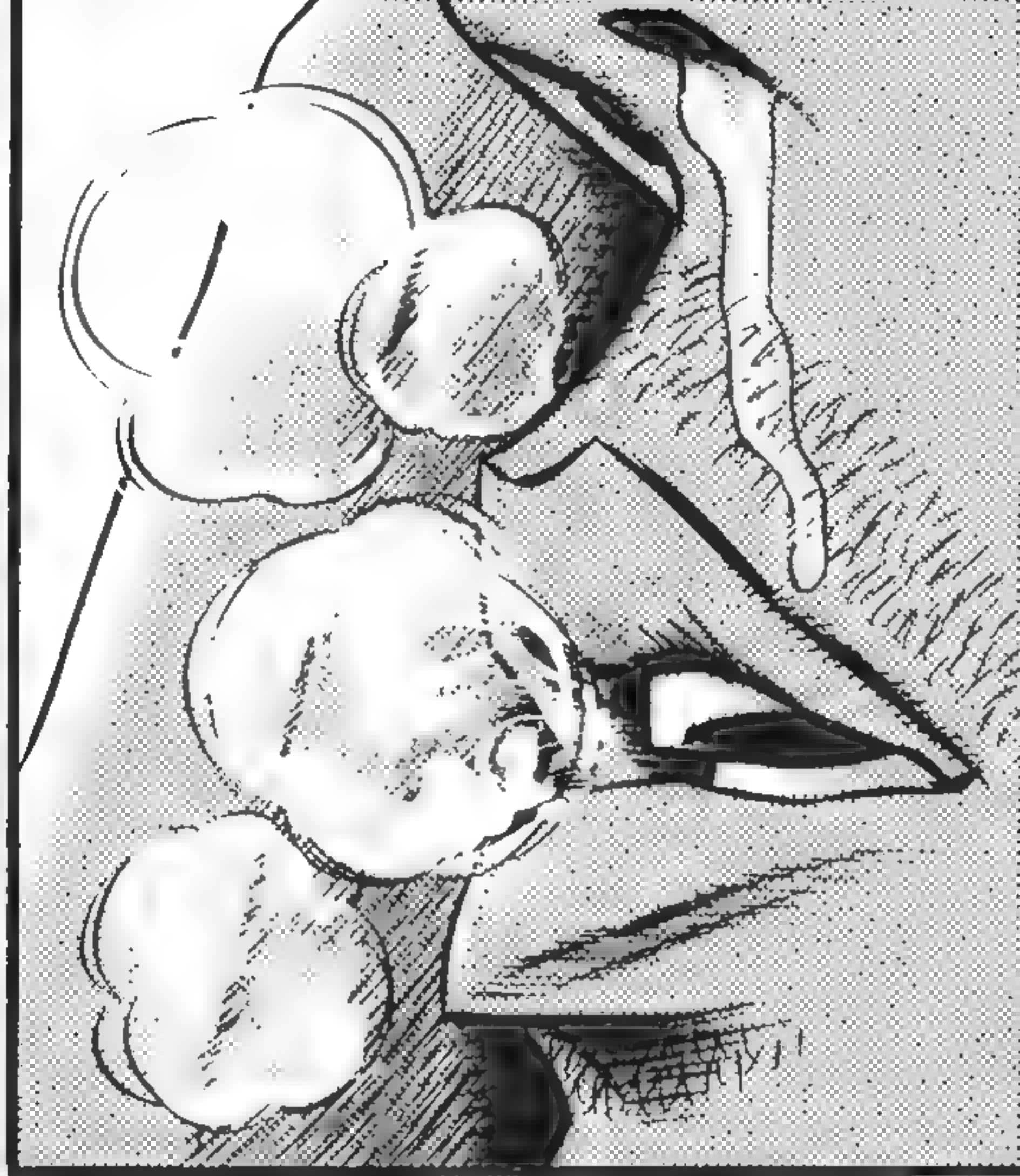




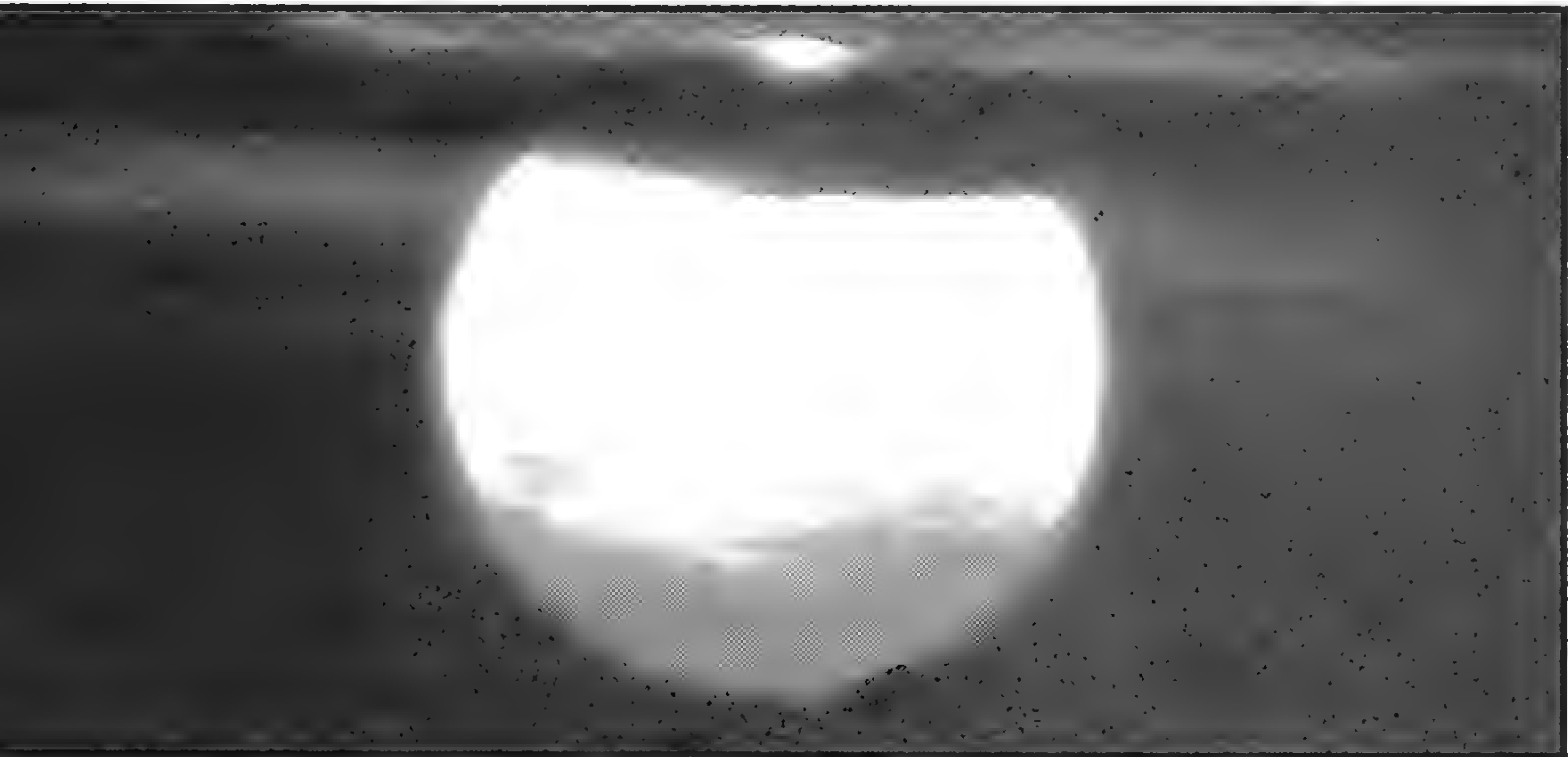
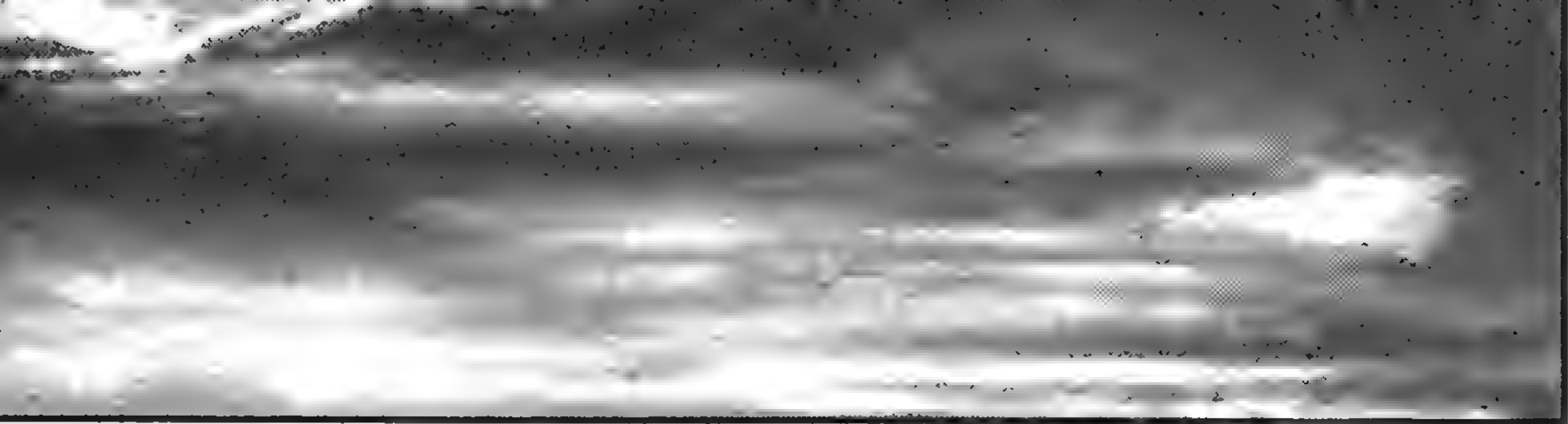








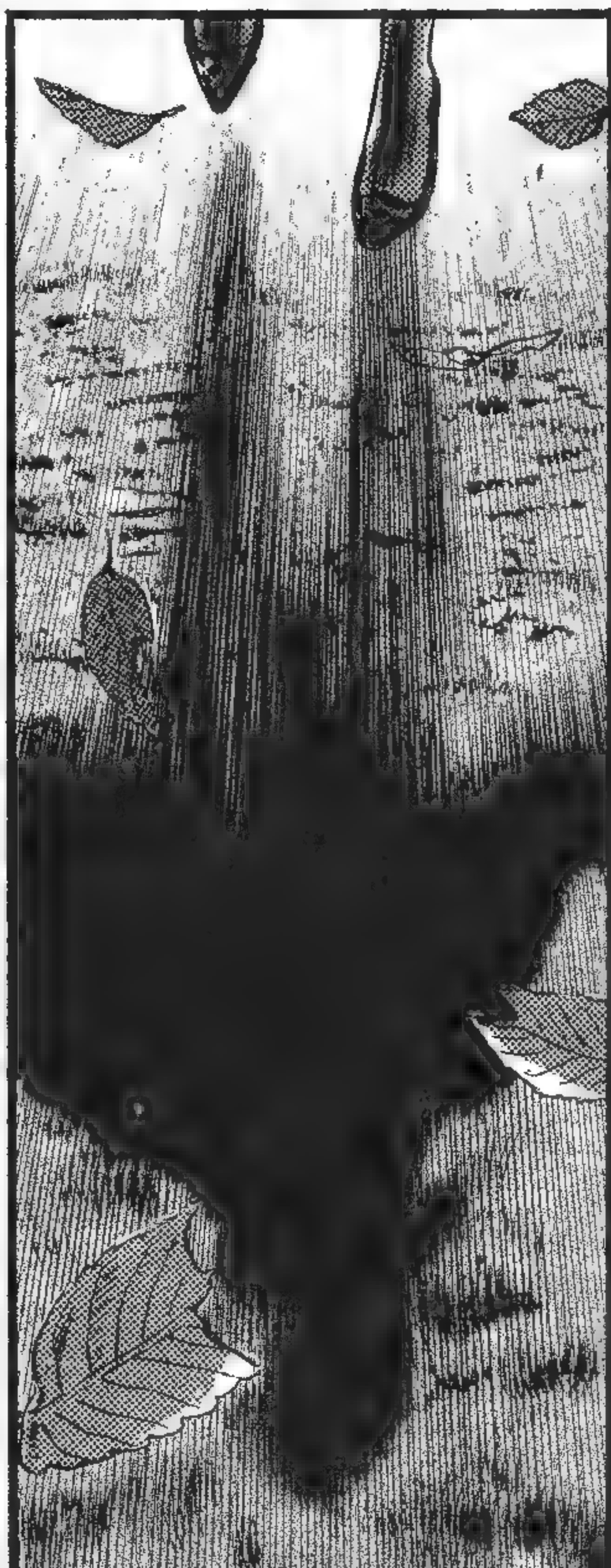








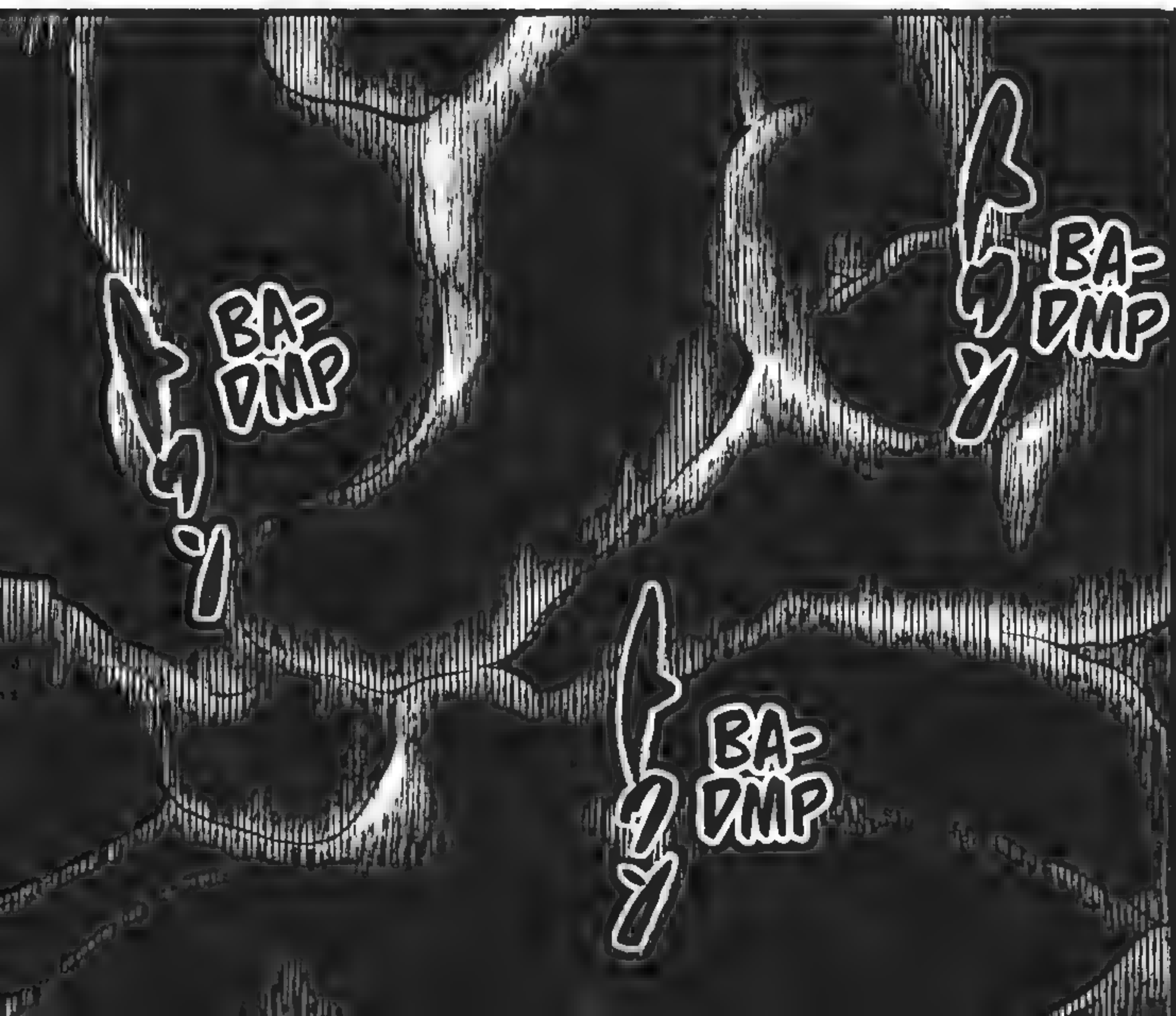
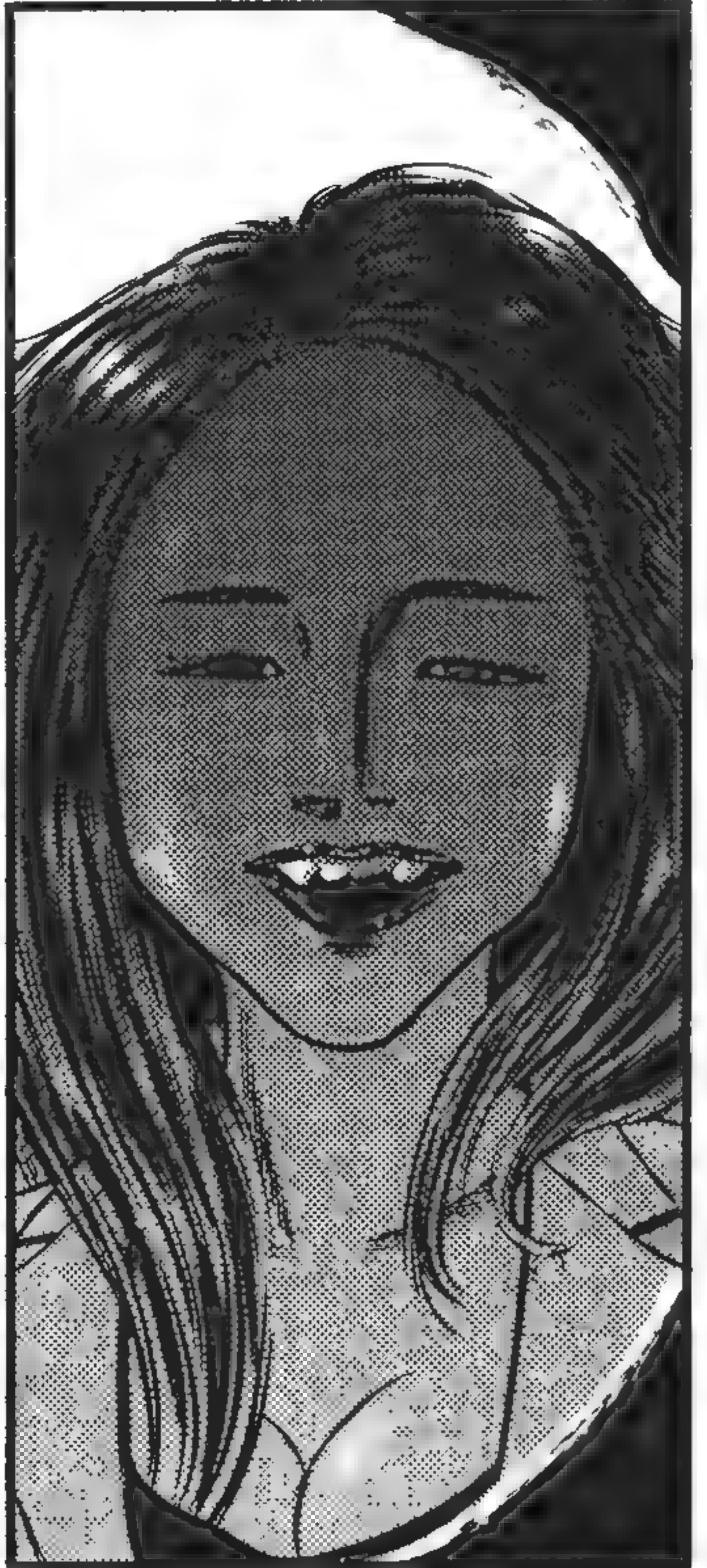








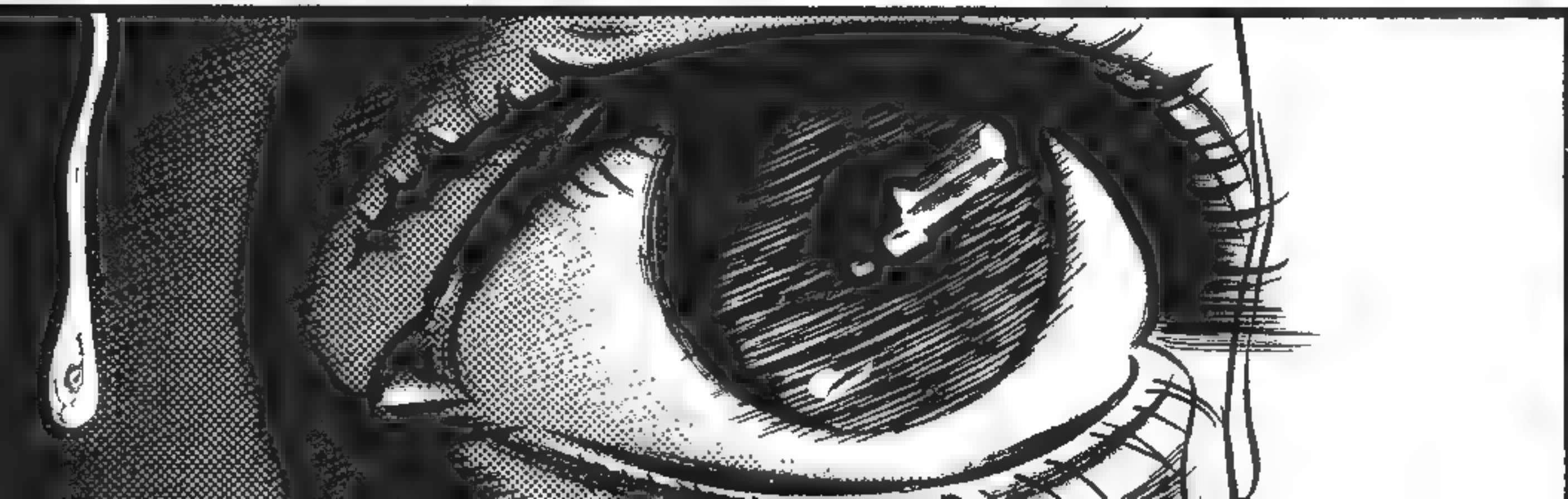




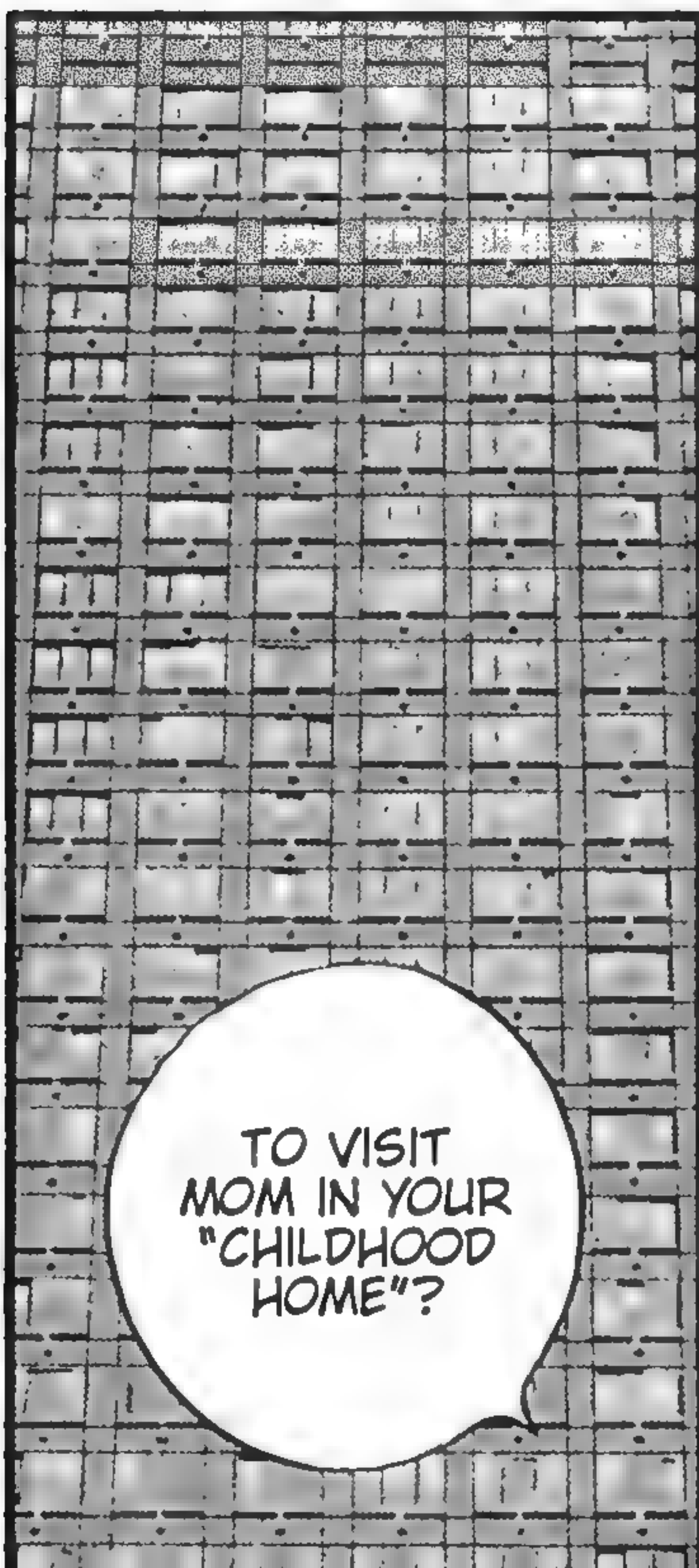












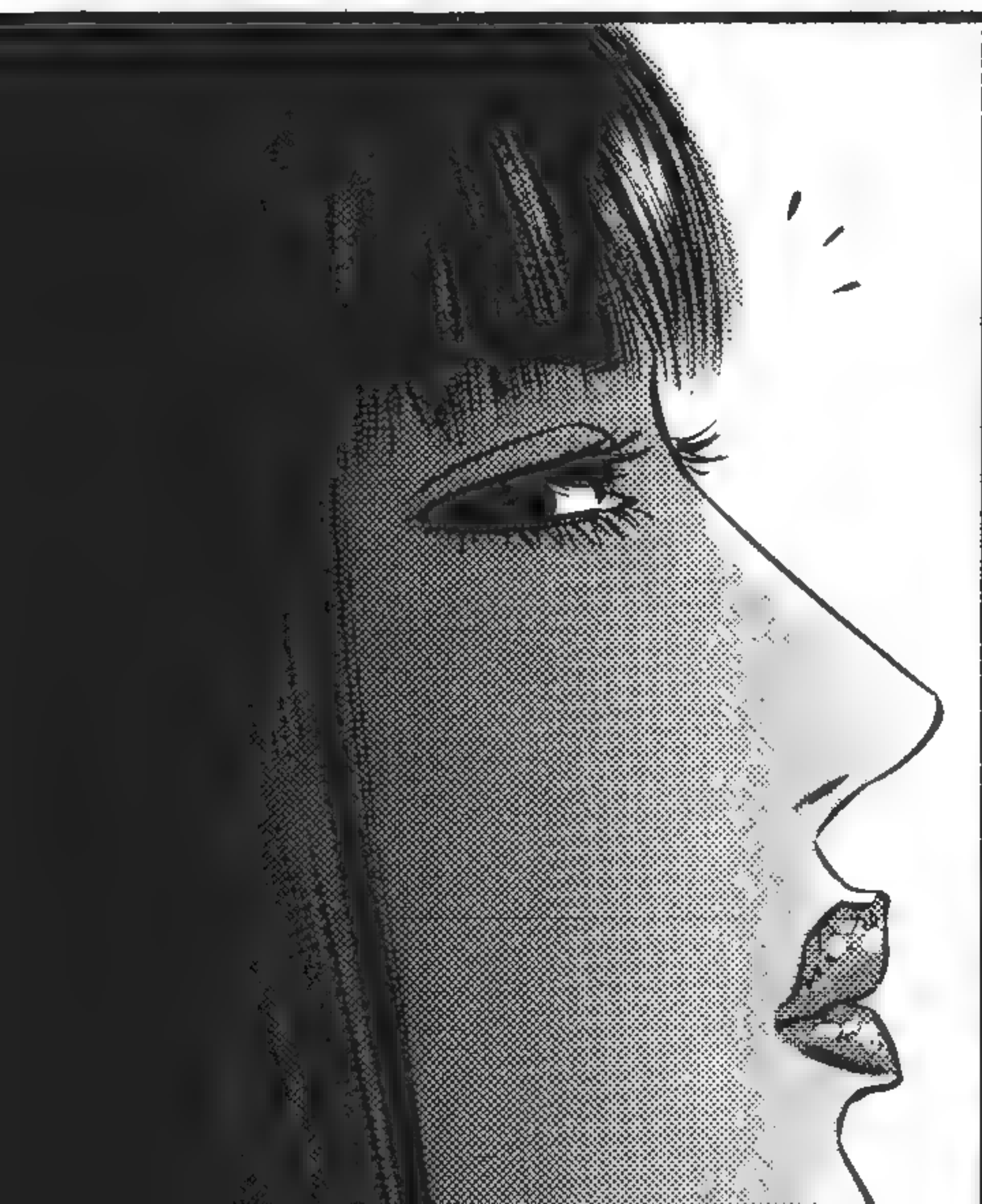
TO VISIT  
MOM IN YOUR  
"CHILDHOOD  
HOME"?



?

GONNA  
HANG OUT  
THERE  
AGAIN  
TODAY?









WHAT DO  
YOU DO  
FOR A  
LIVING...

AND WHERE  
DID WE  
FIRST MEET,  
MAKIMURA-  
SAN?



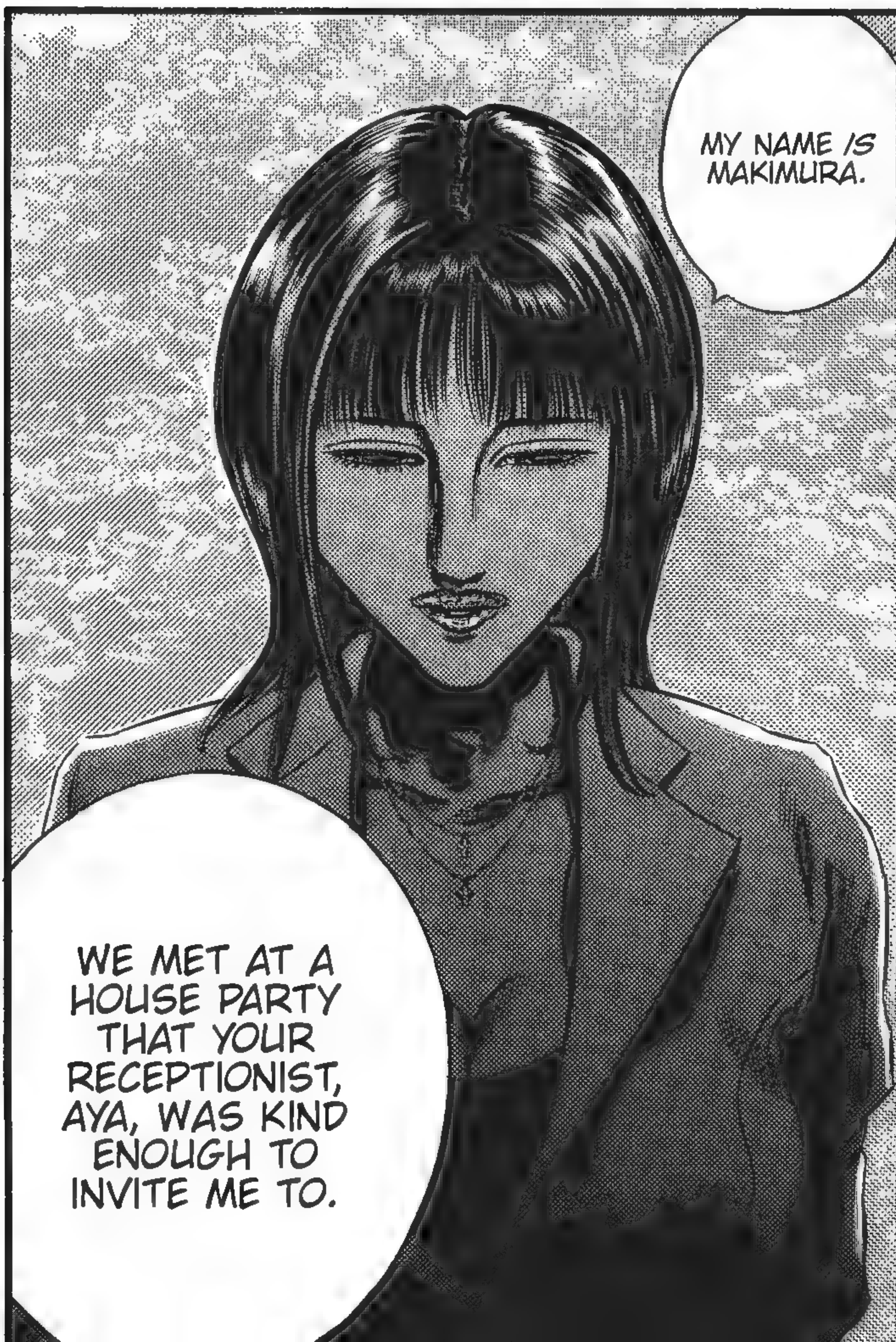
IS NOT  
MAKIMURA.

MY  
NAME...

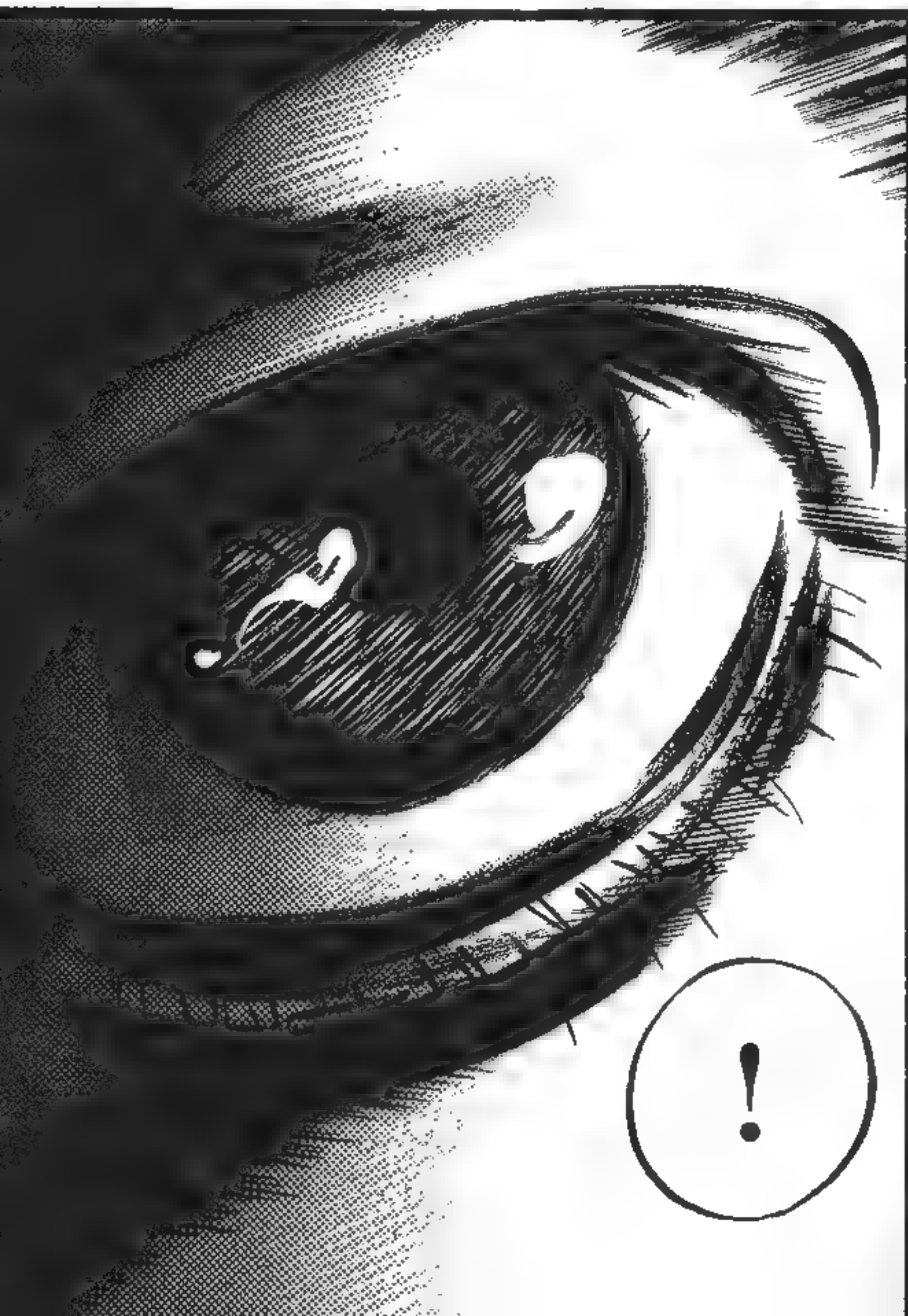
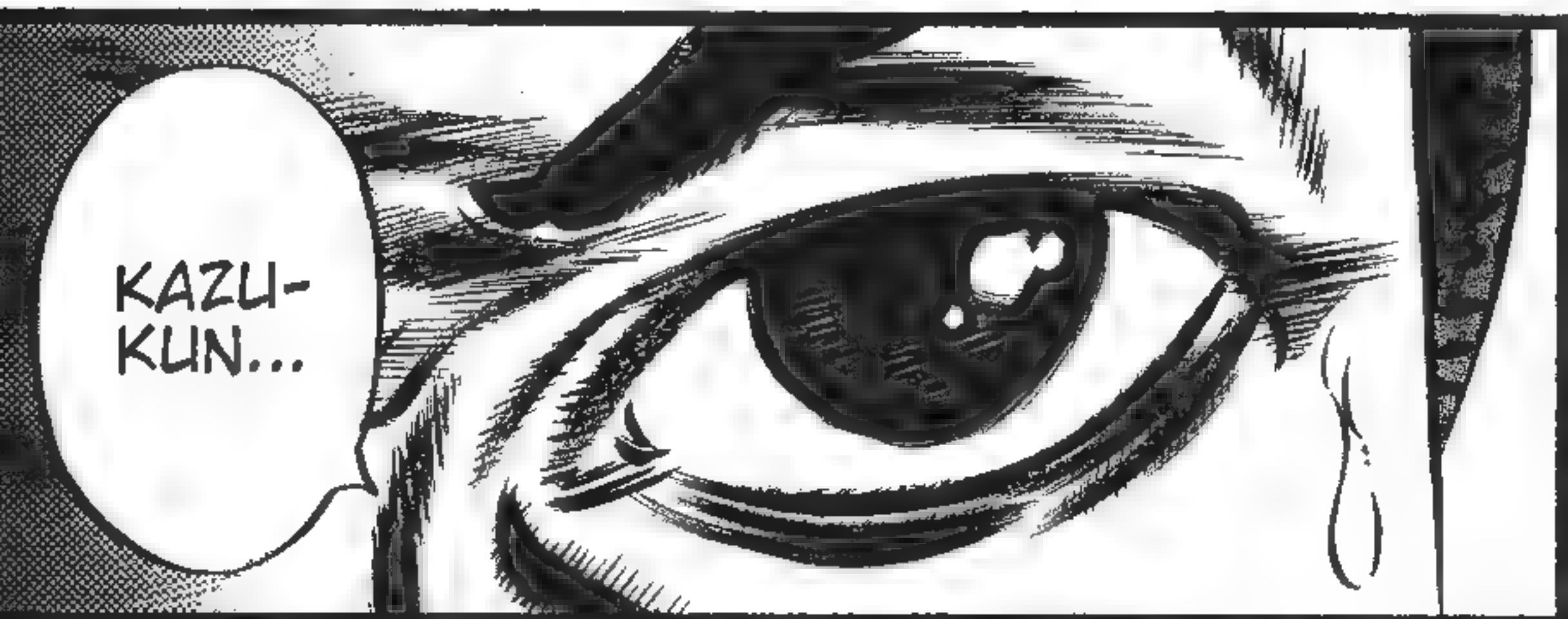
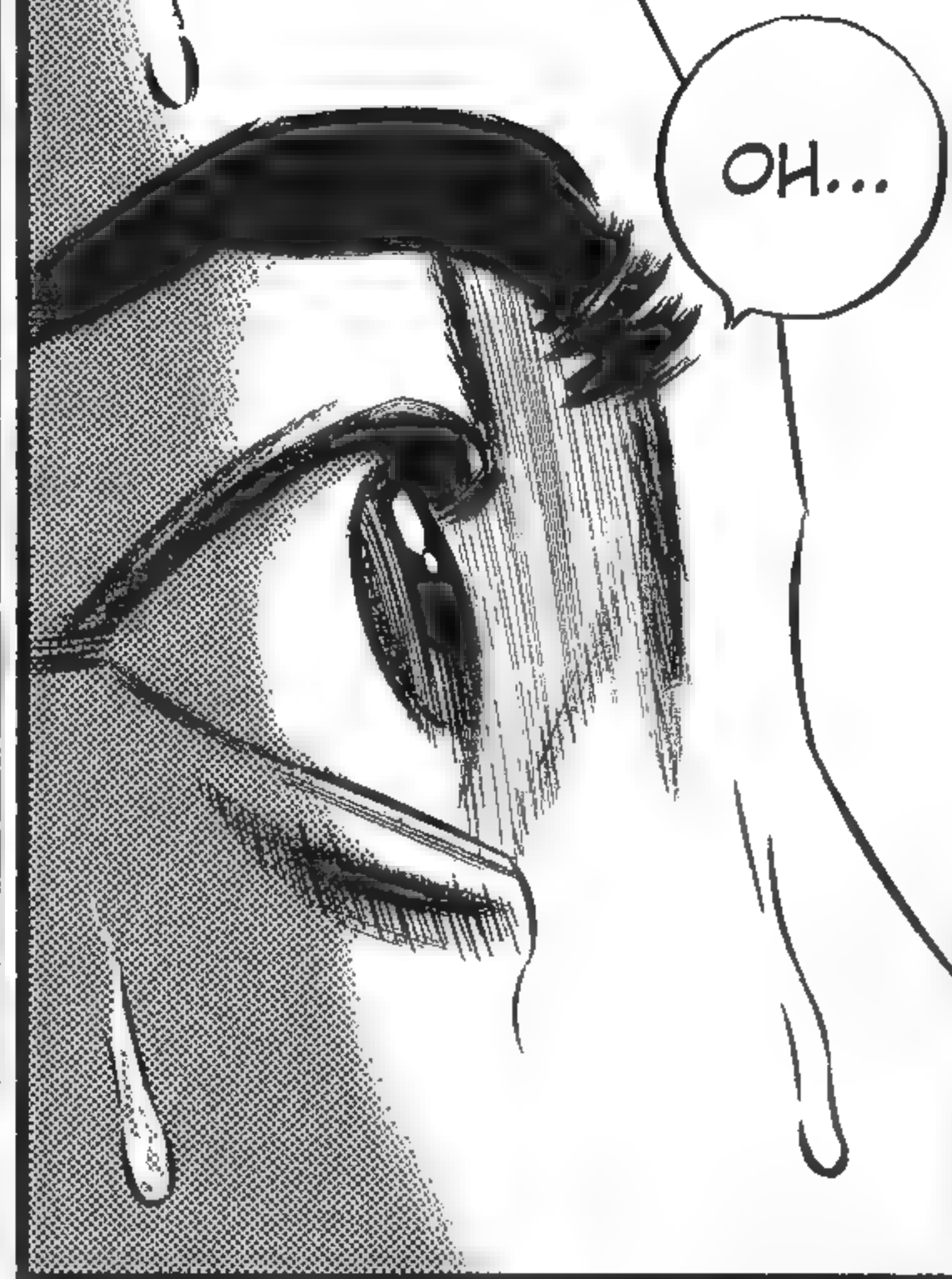
















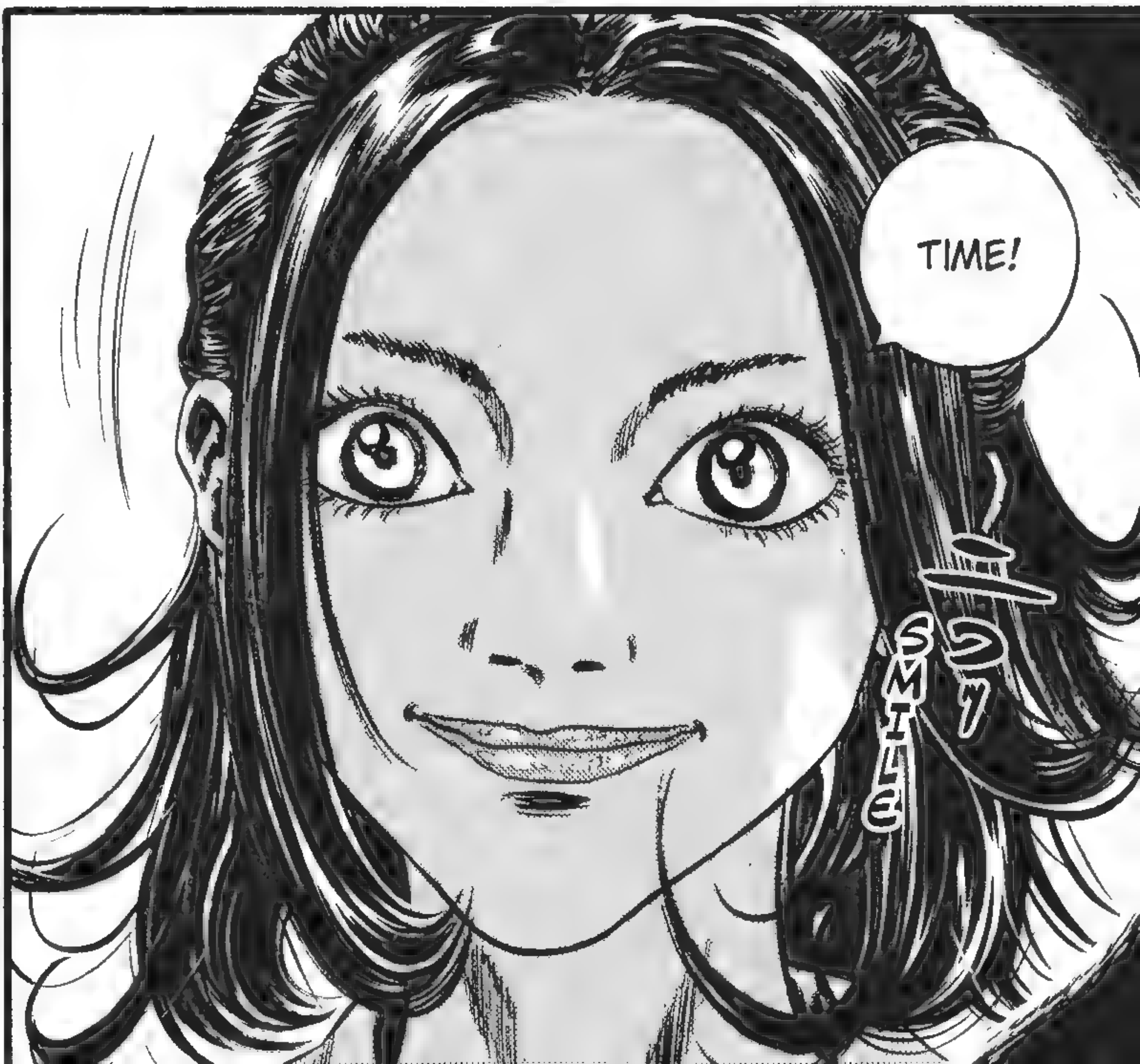
THANKS  
AGAIN  
FOR  
THAT.



I HAD A  
REALLY...  
GREAT...



AH...



TIME!





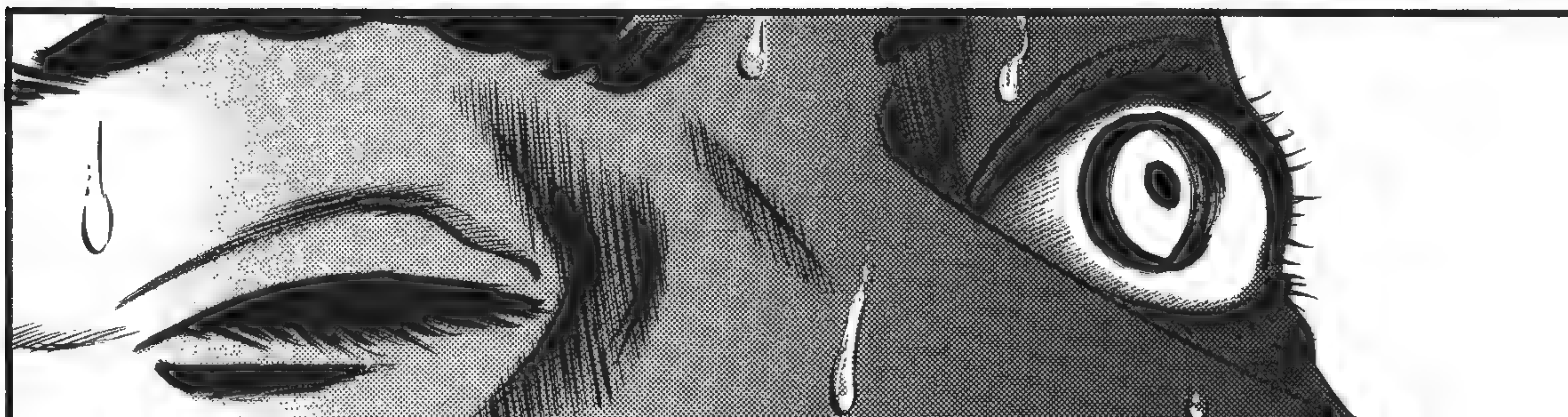
SHUDDER



ANOTHER  
LIE, HUH?



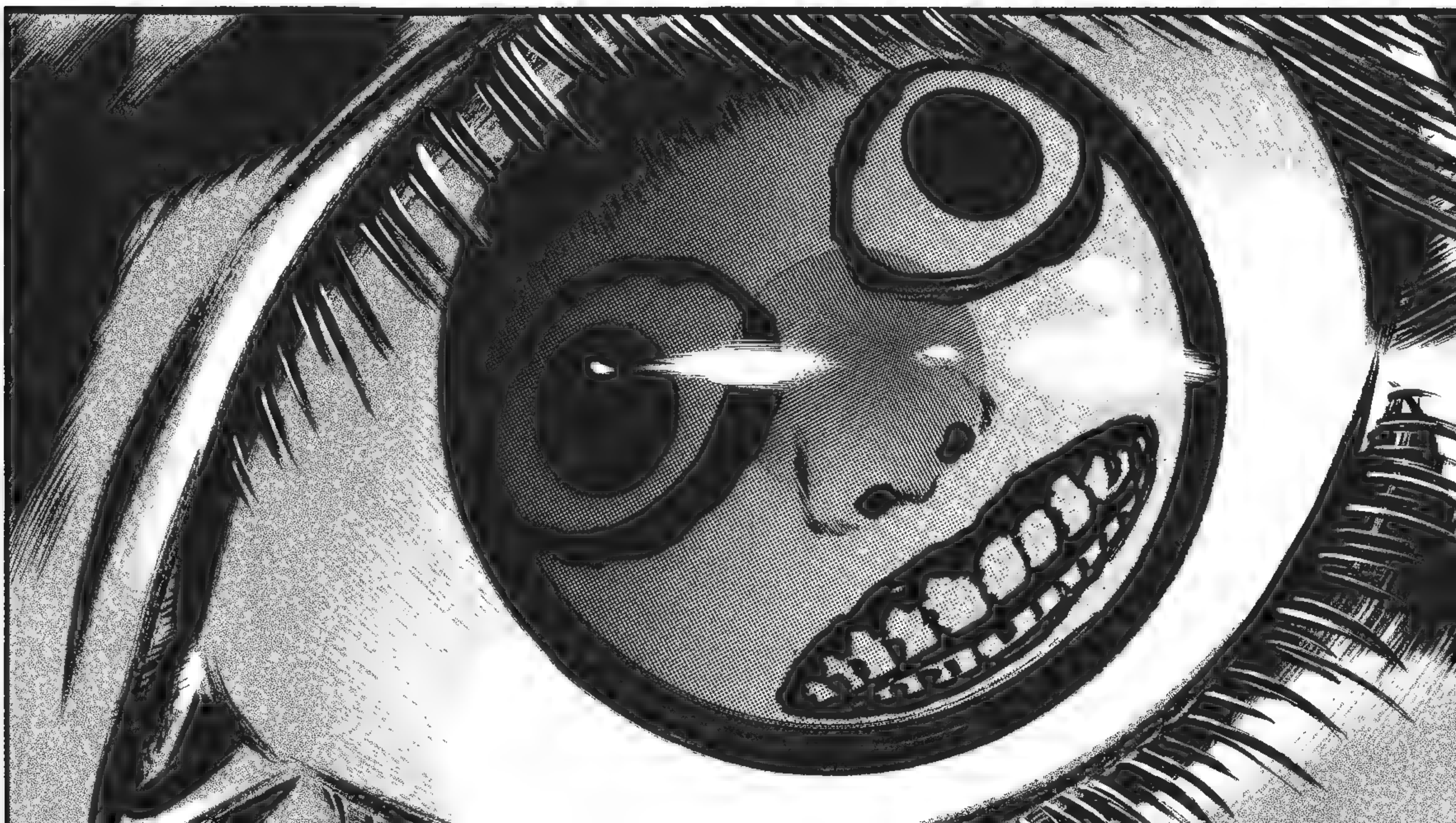




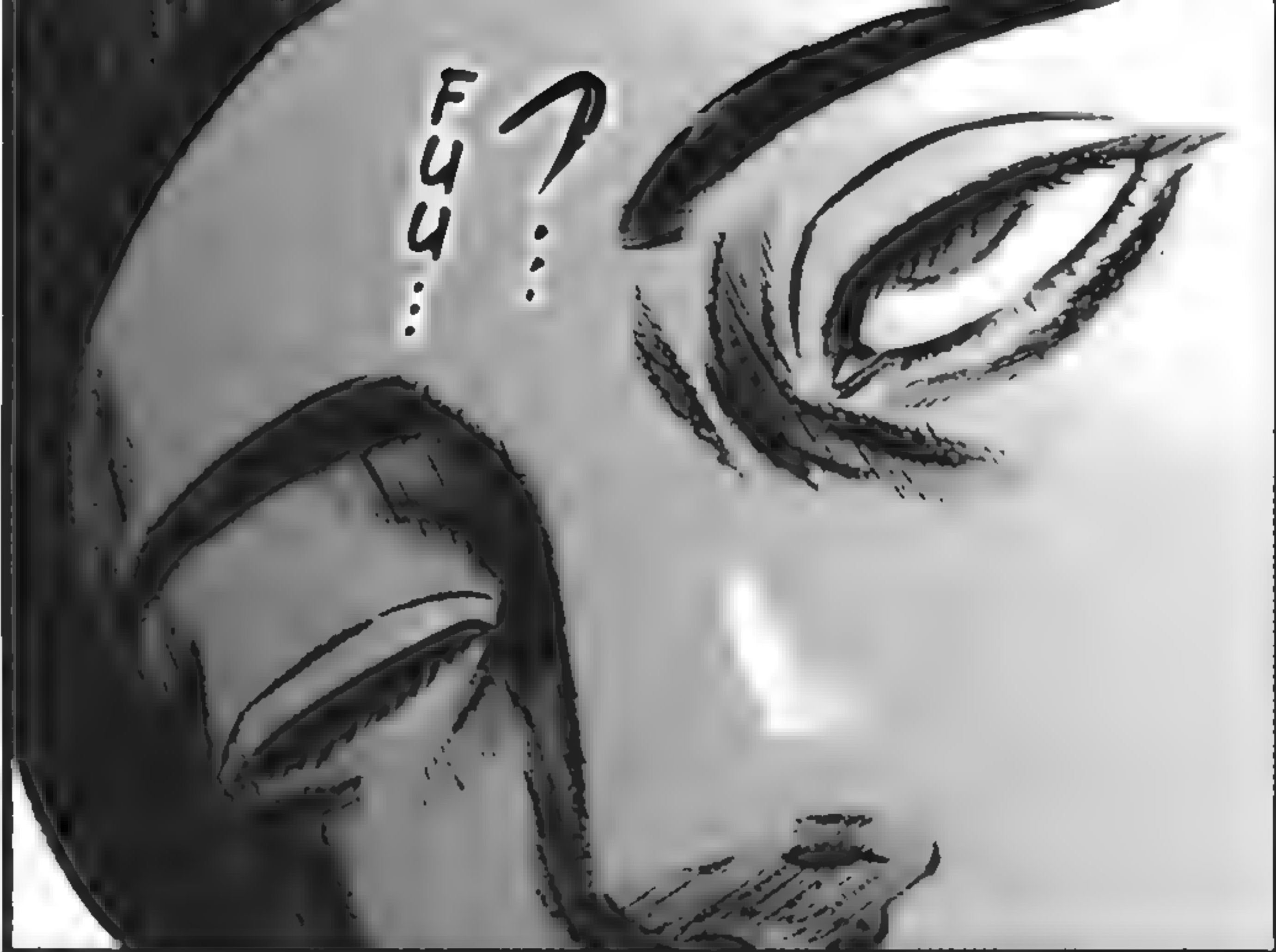
















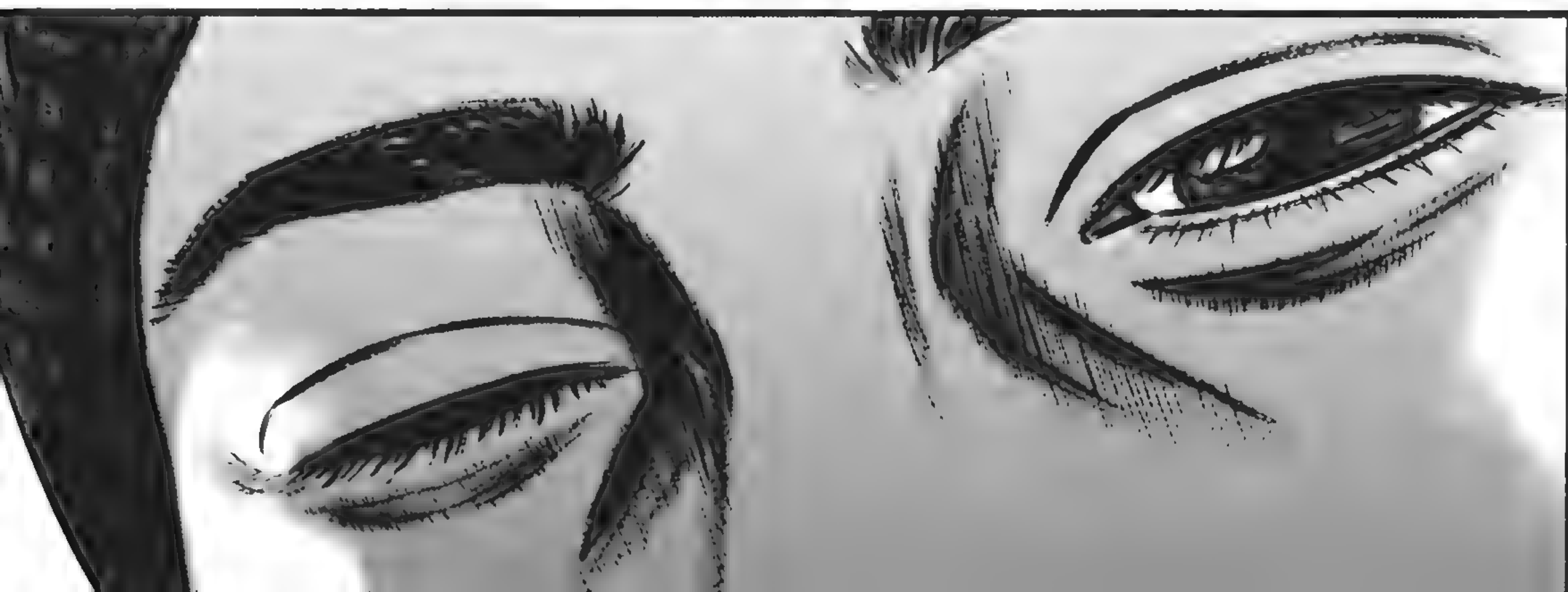




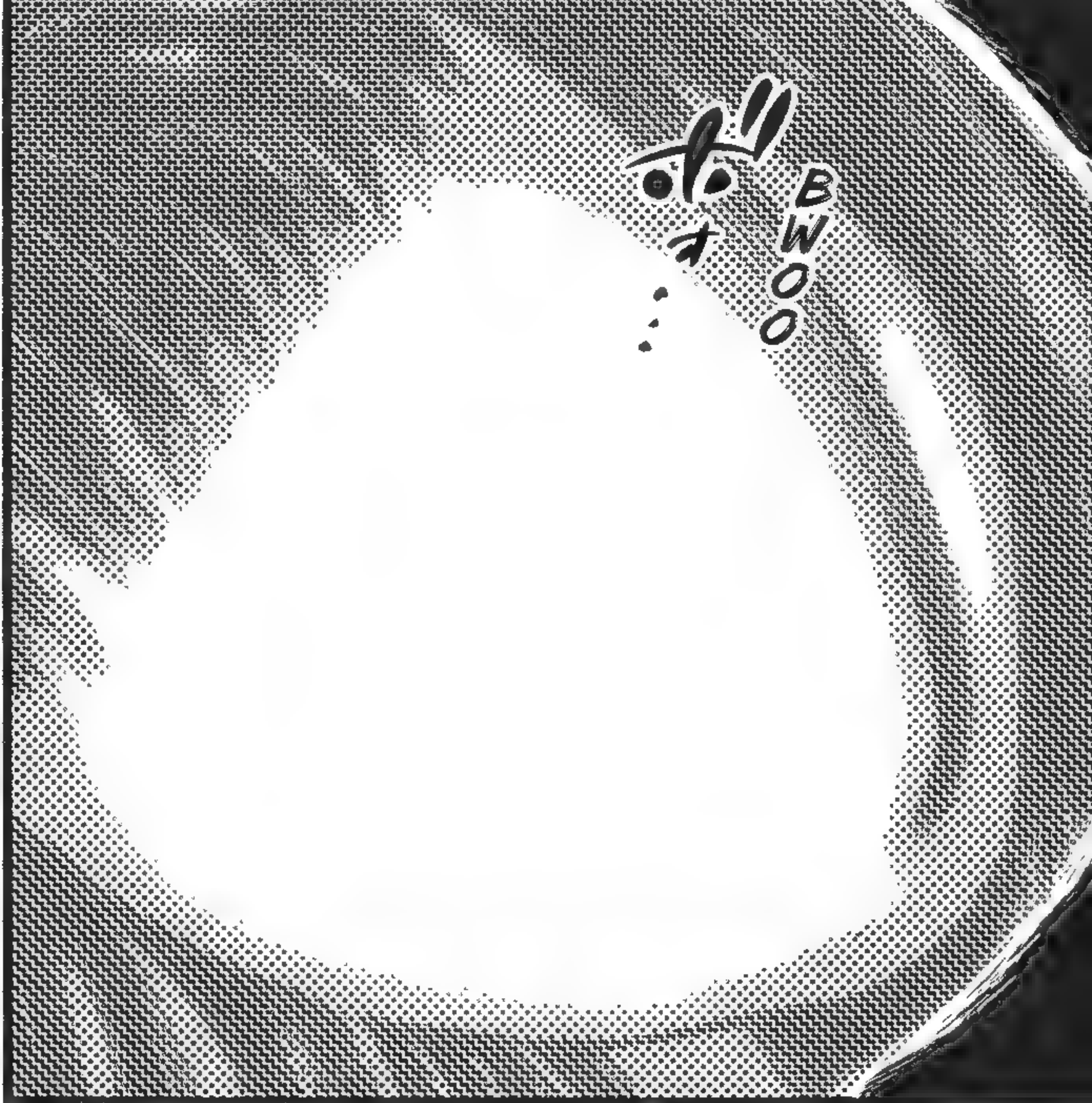
















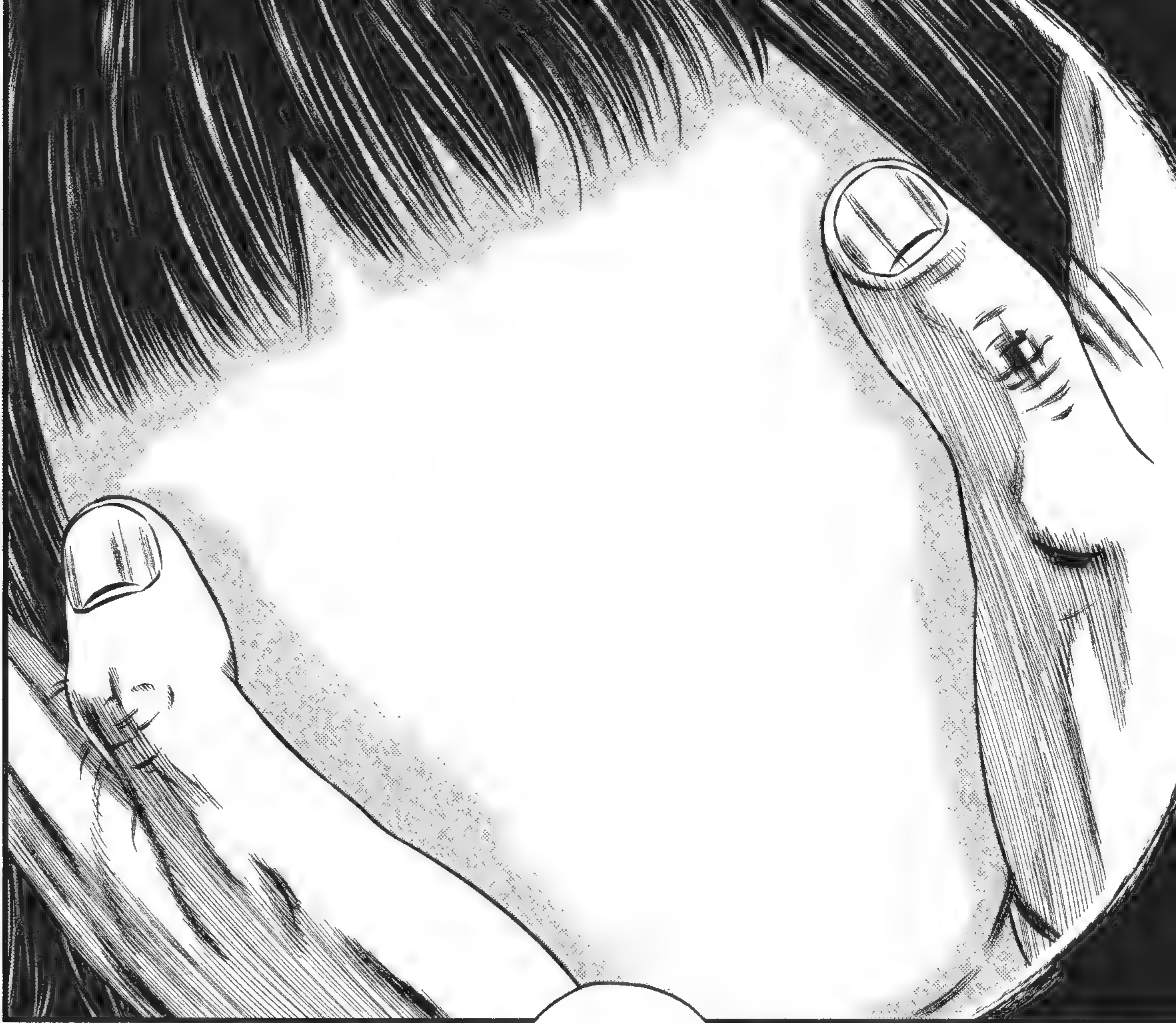
OH.



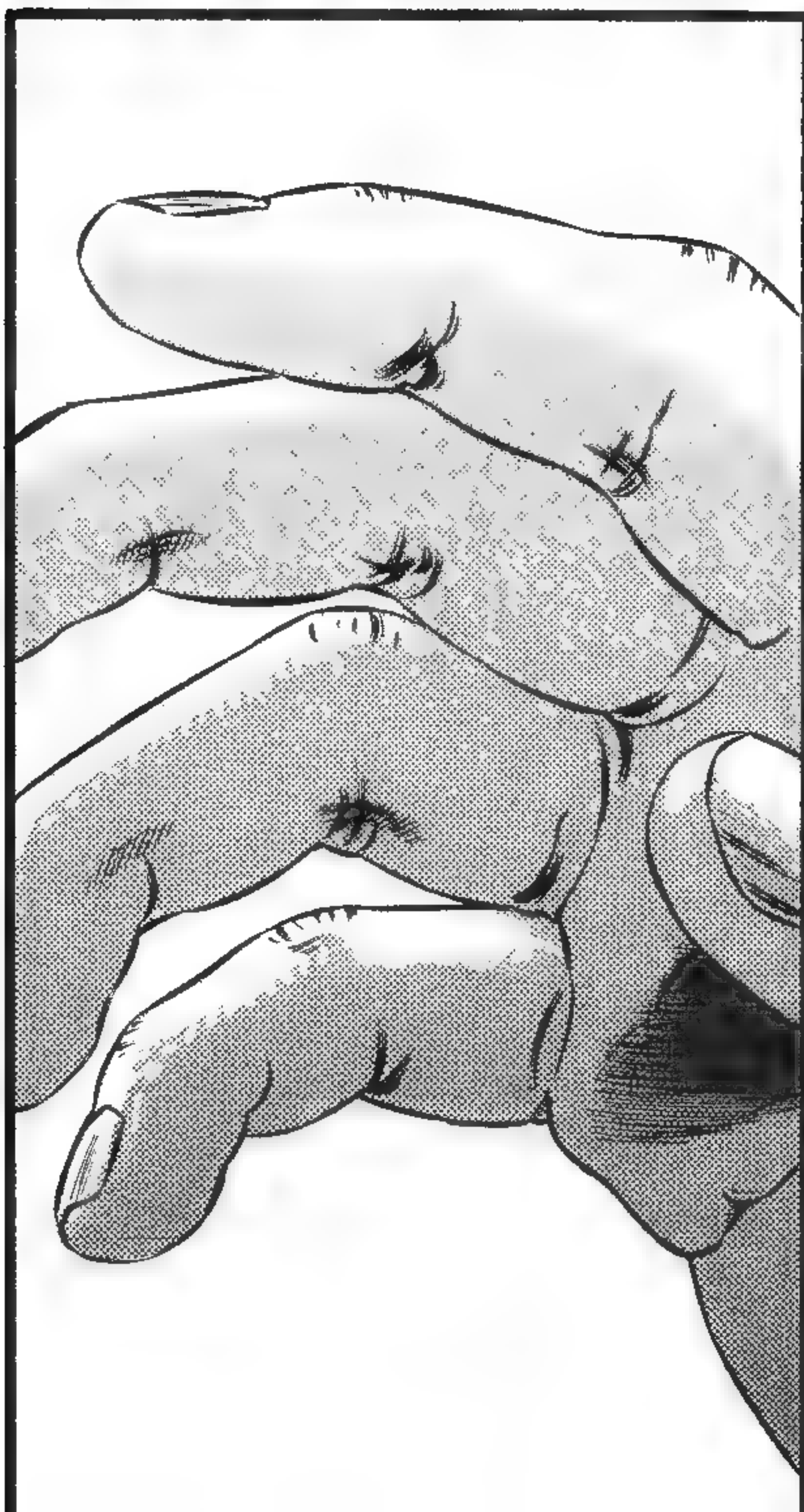
GRAB

NOW I  
KNOW  
YOU.





WHERE DID  
YOU LEAVE  
YOUR FACE?



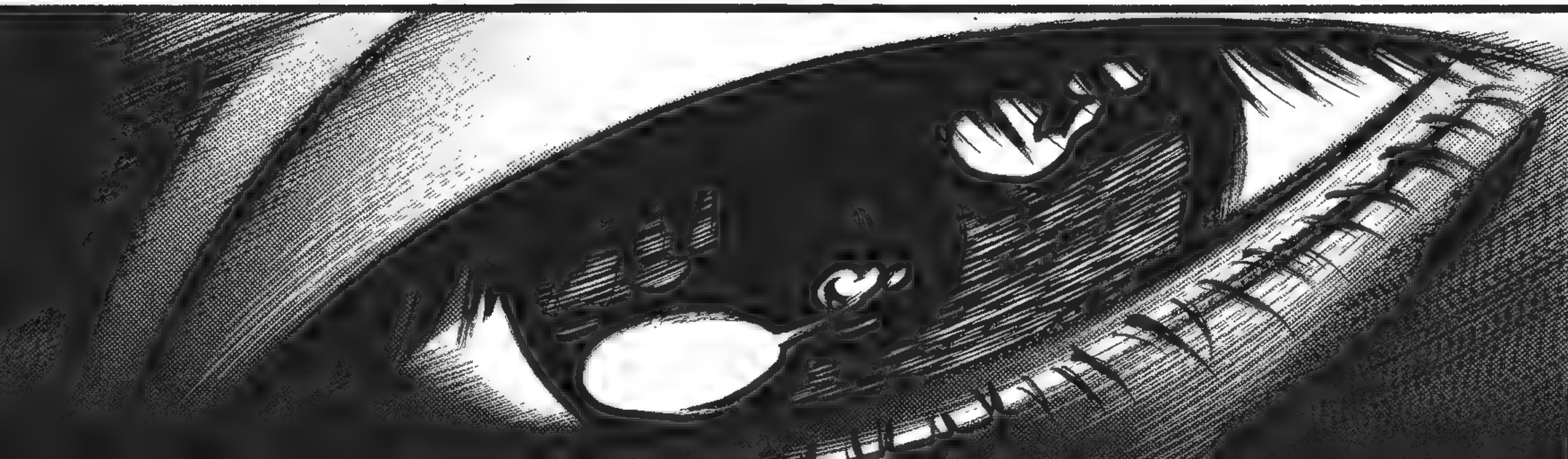
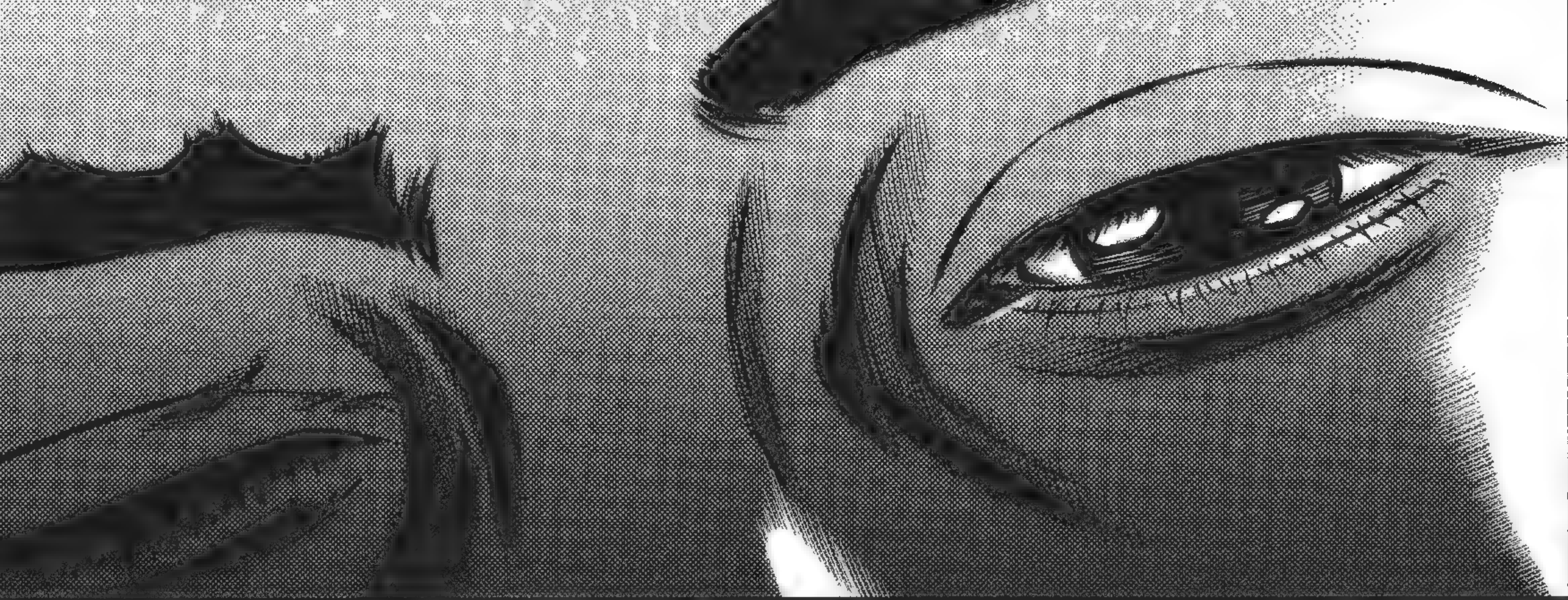
















I KNEW  
IT. YOU ARE  
NANAKO,  
AREN'T YOU?



ZZZZ...  
ZZZZ

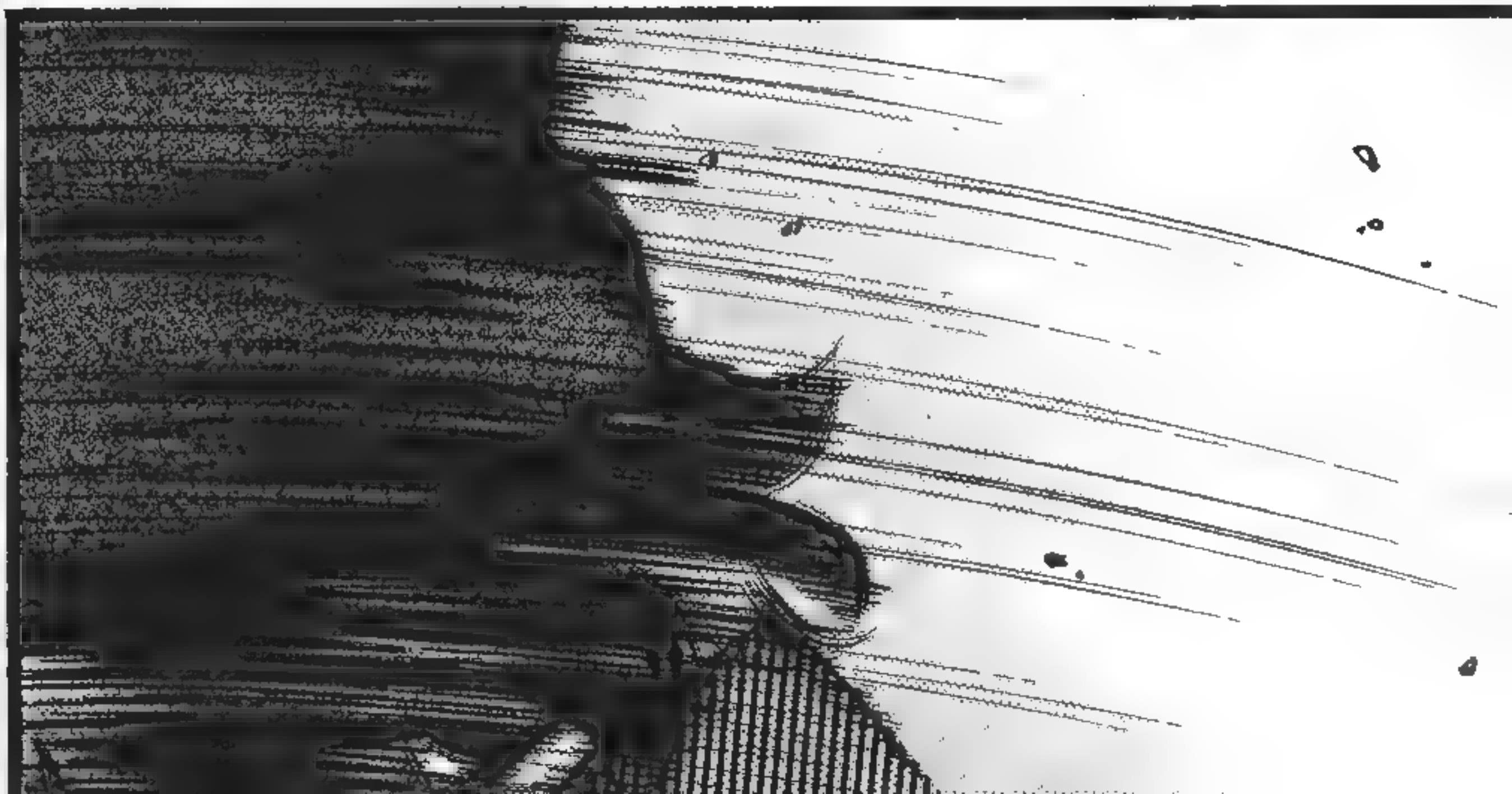
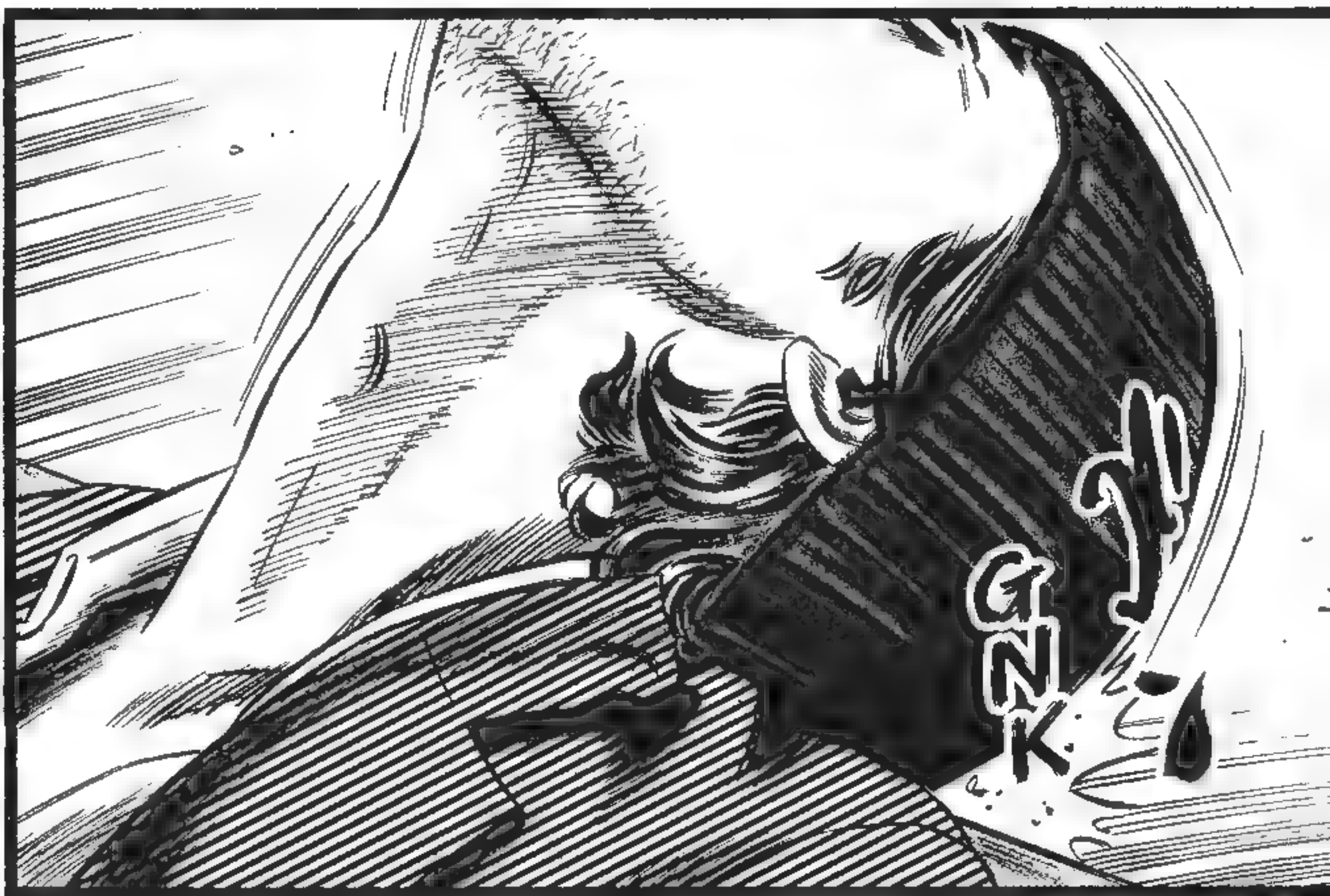


ZZZZ  
ZZZZ

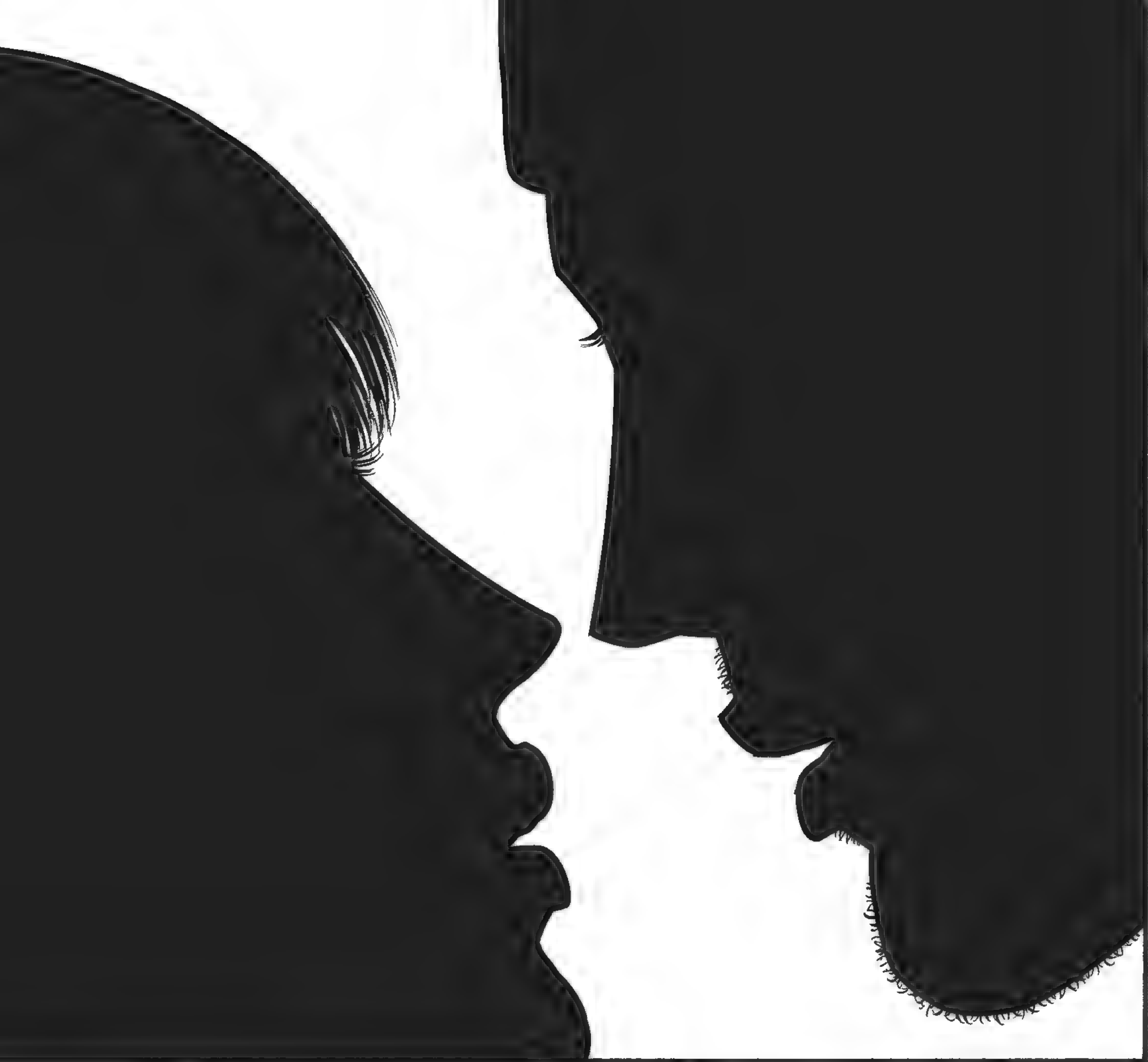








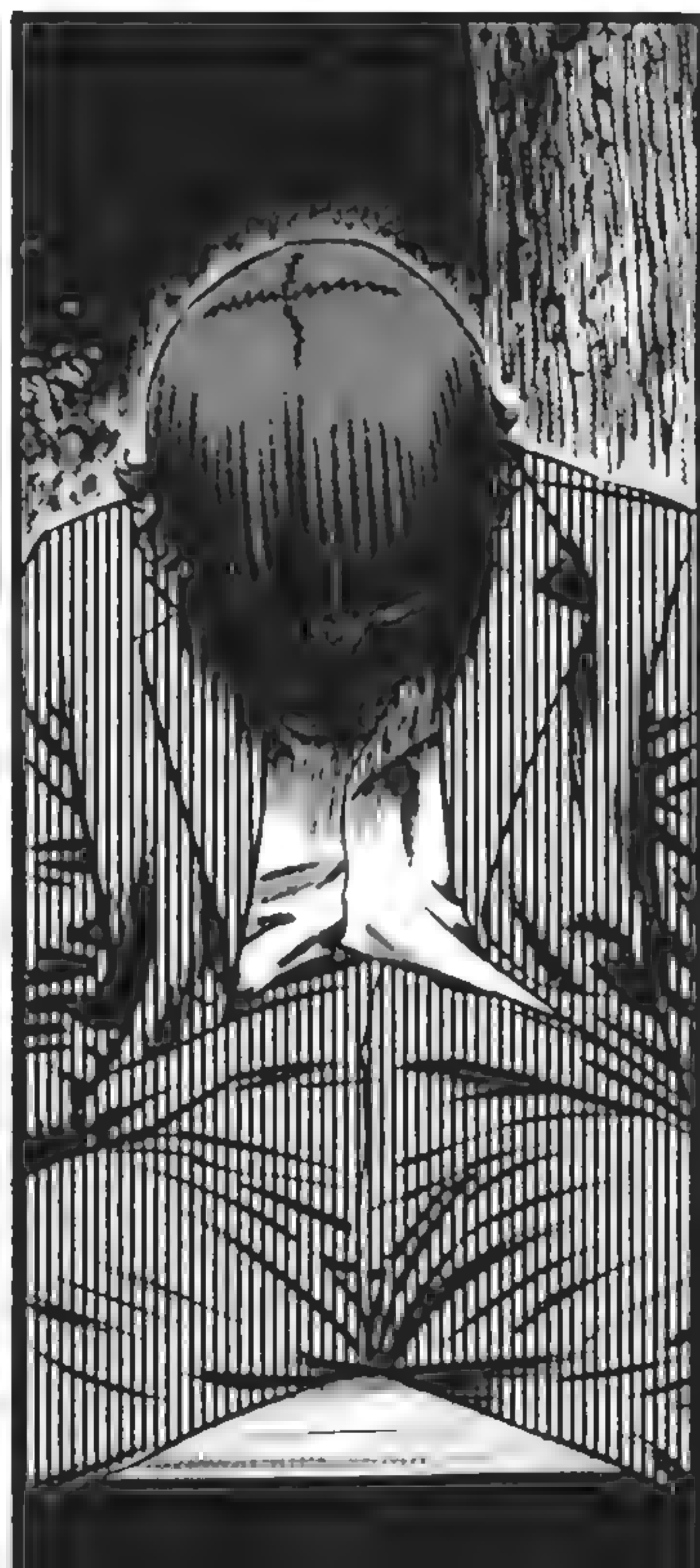




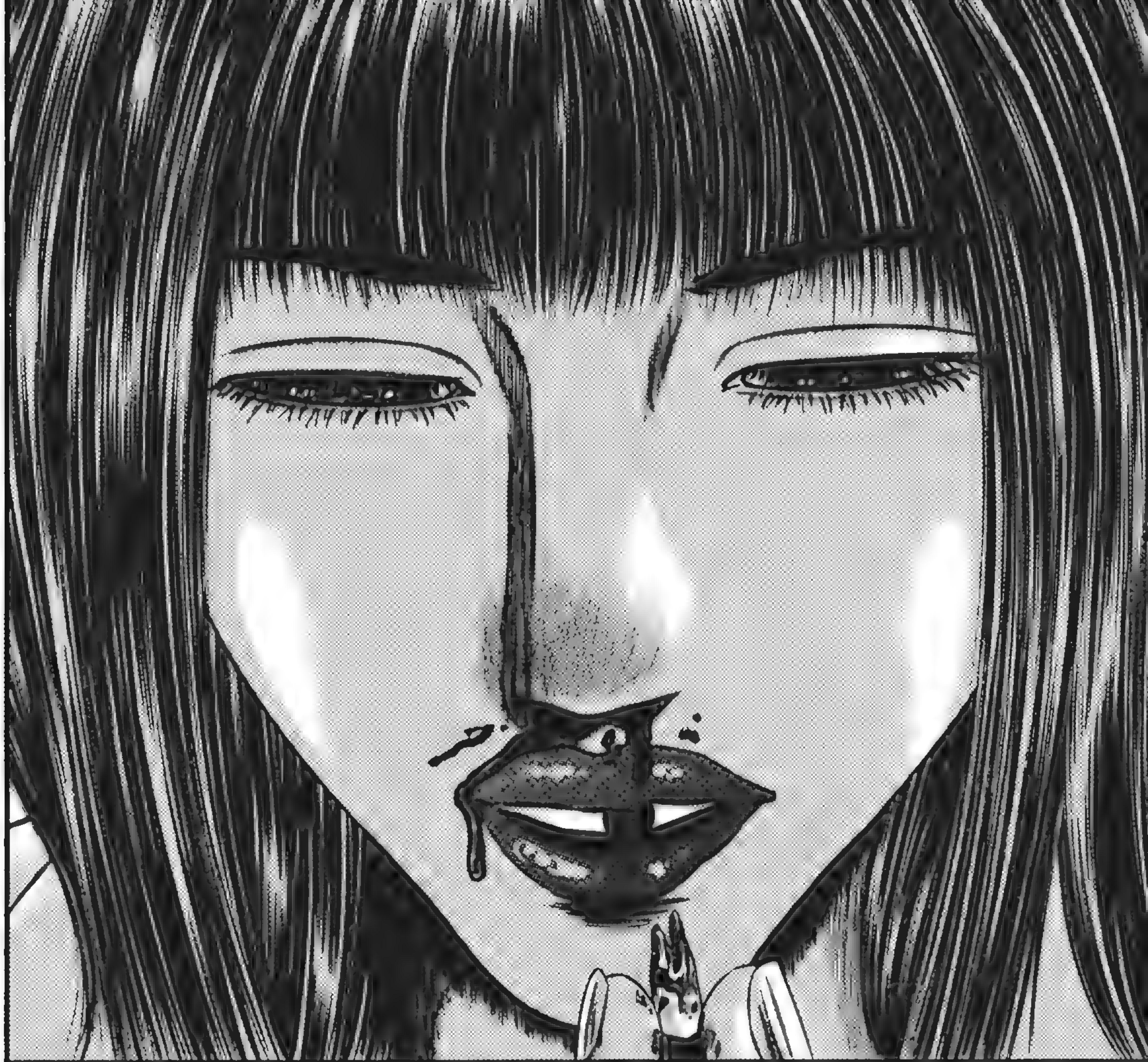








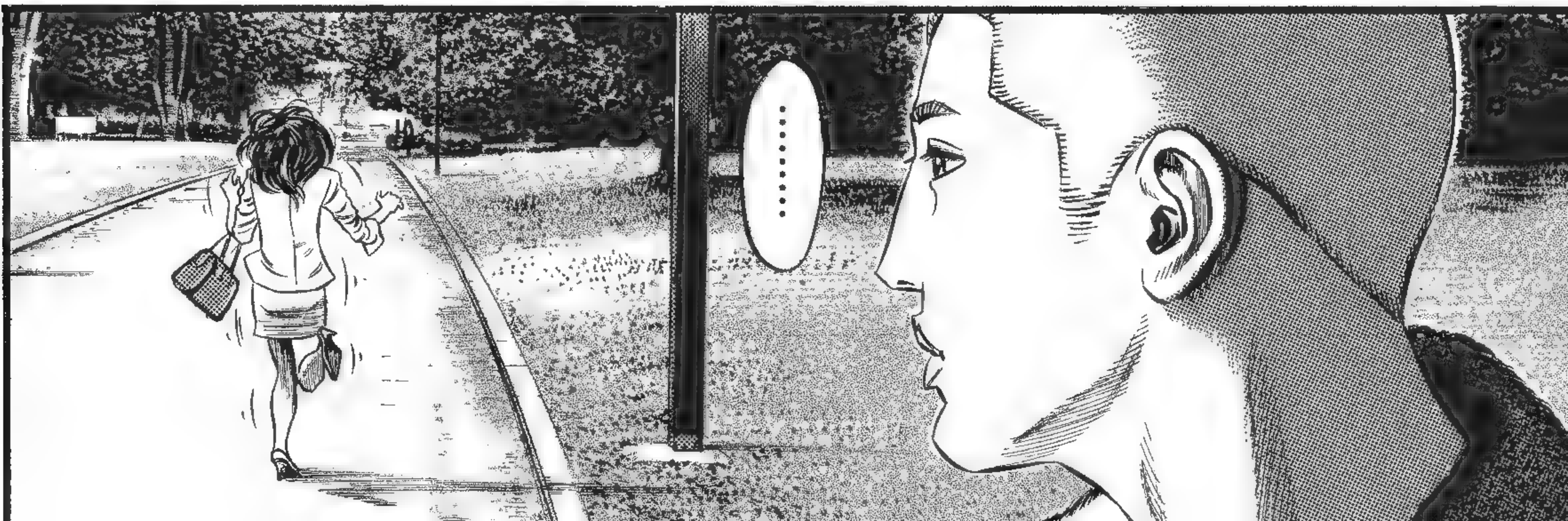




















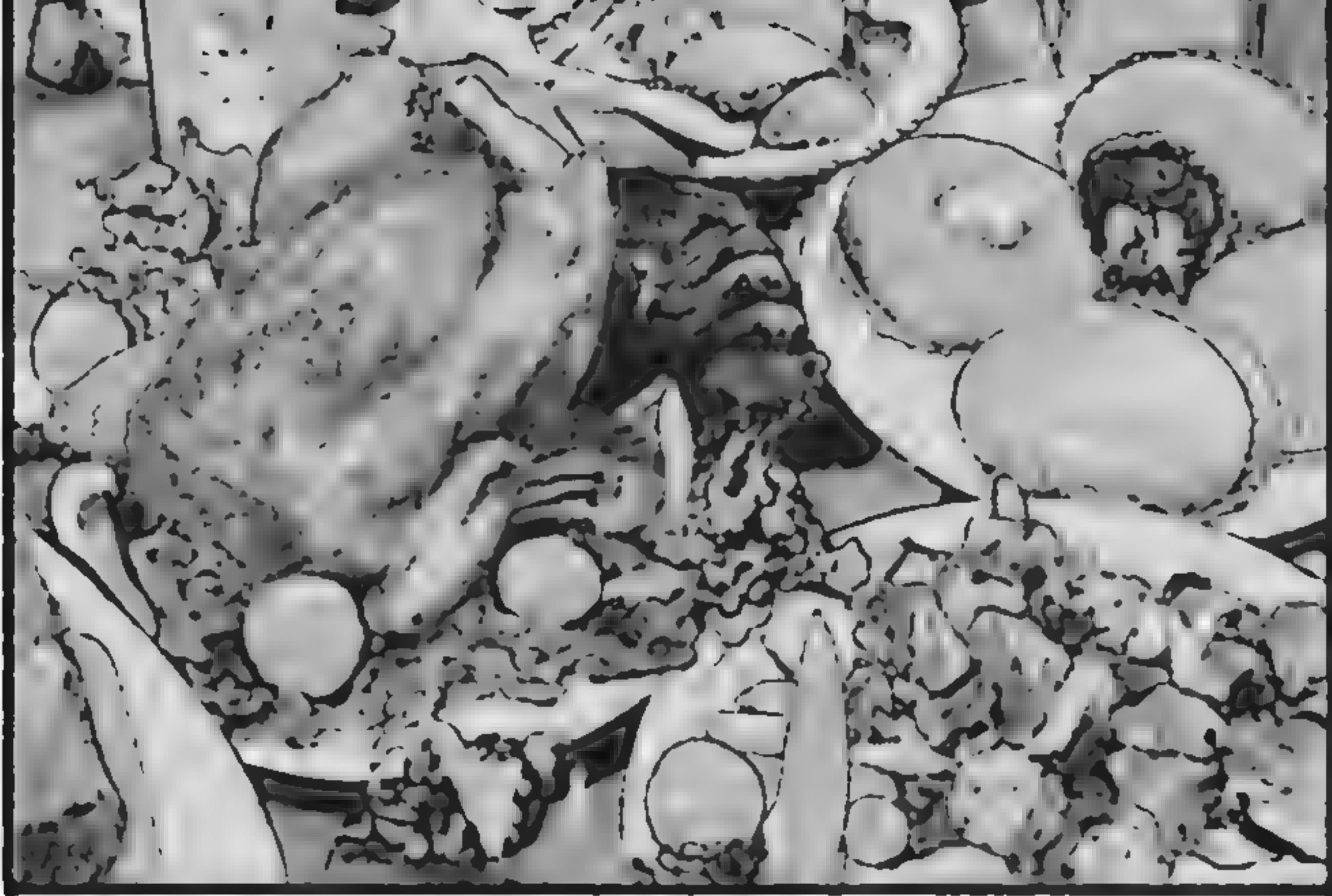




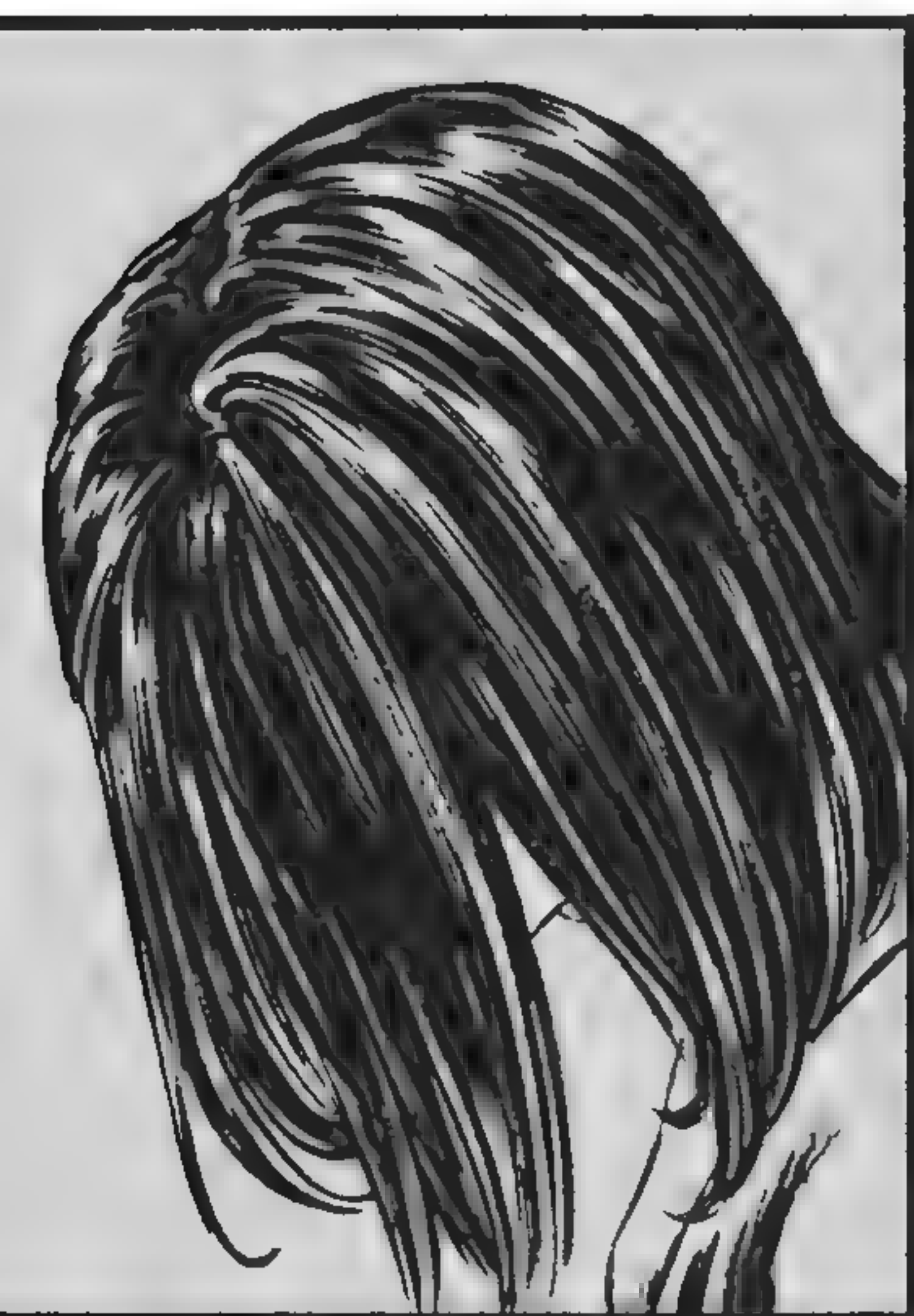












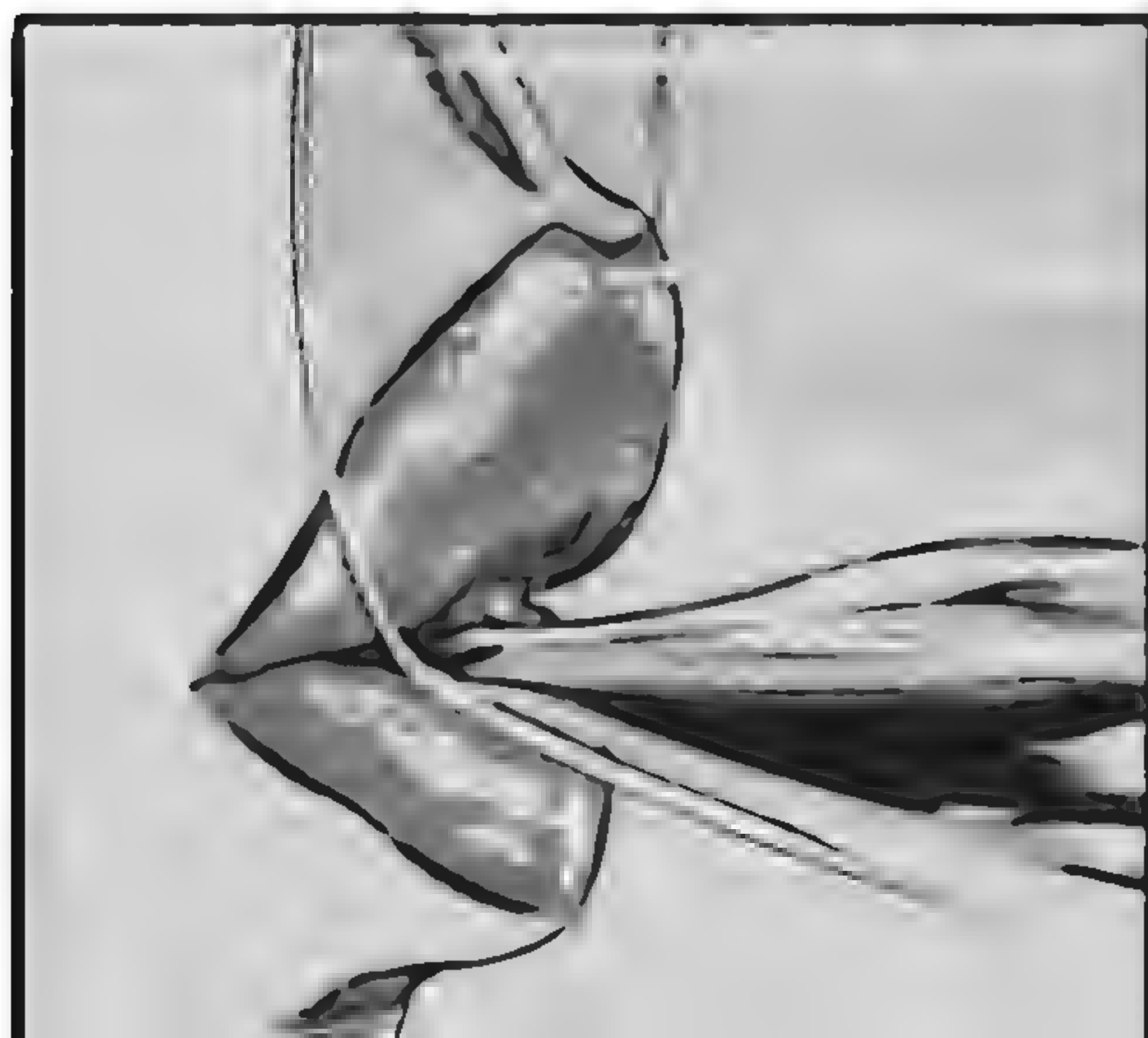




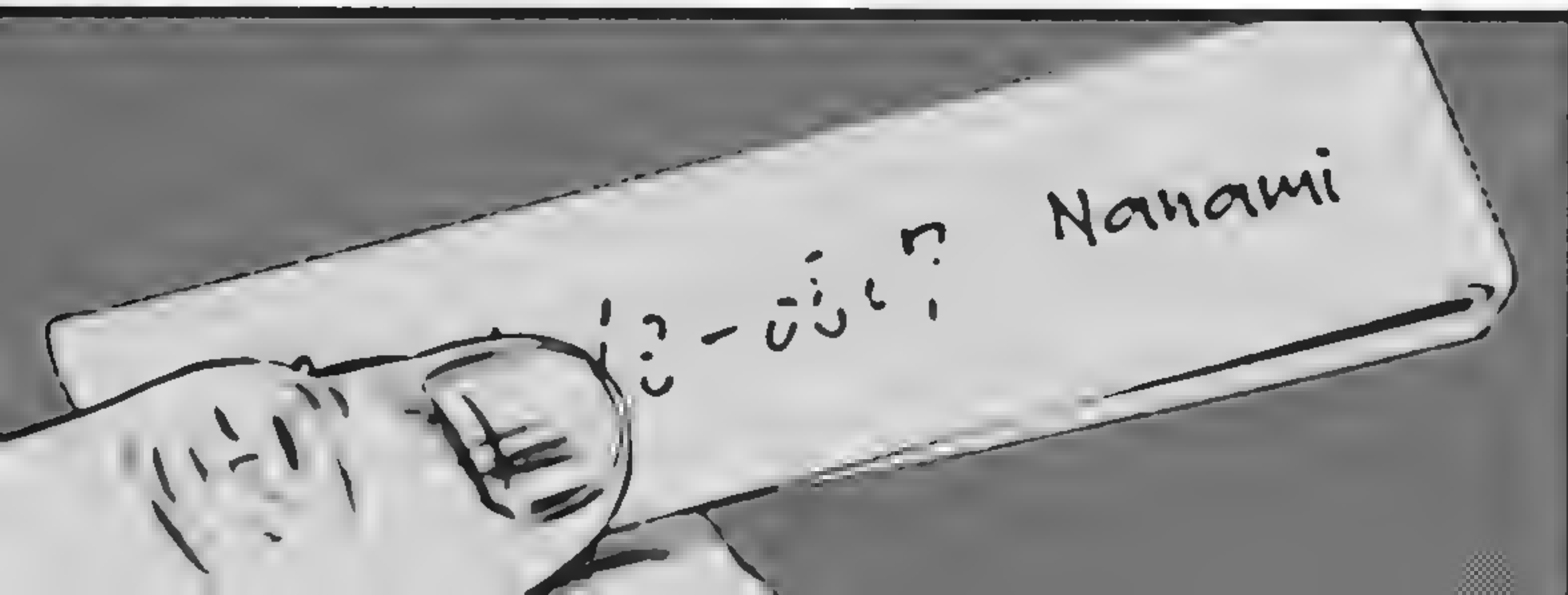
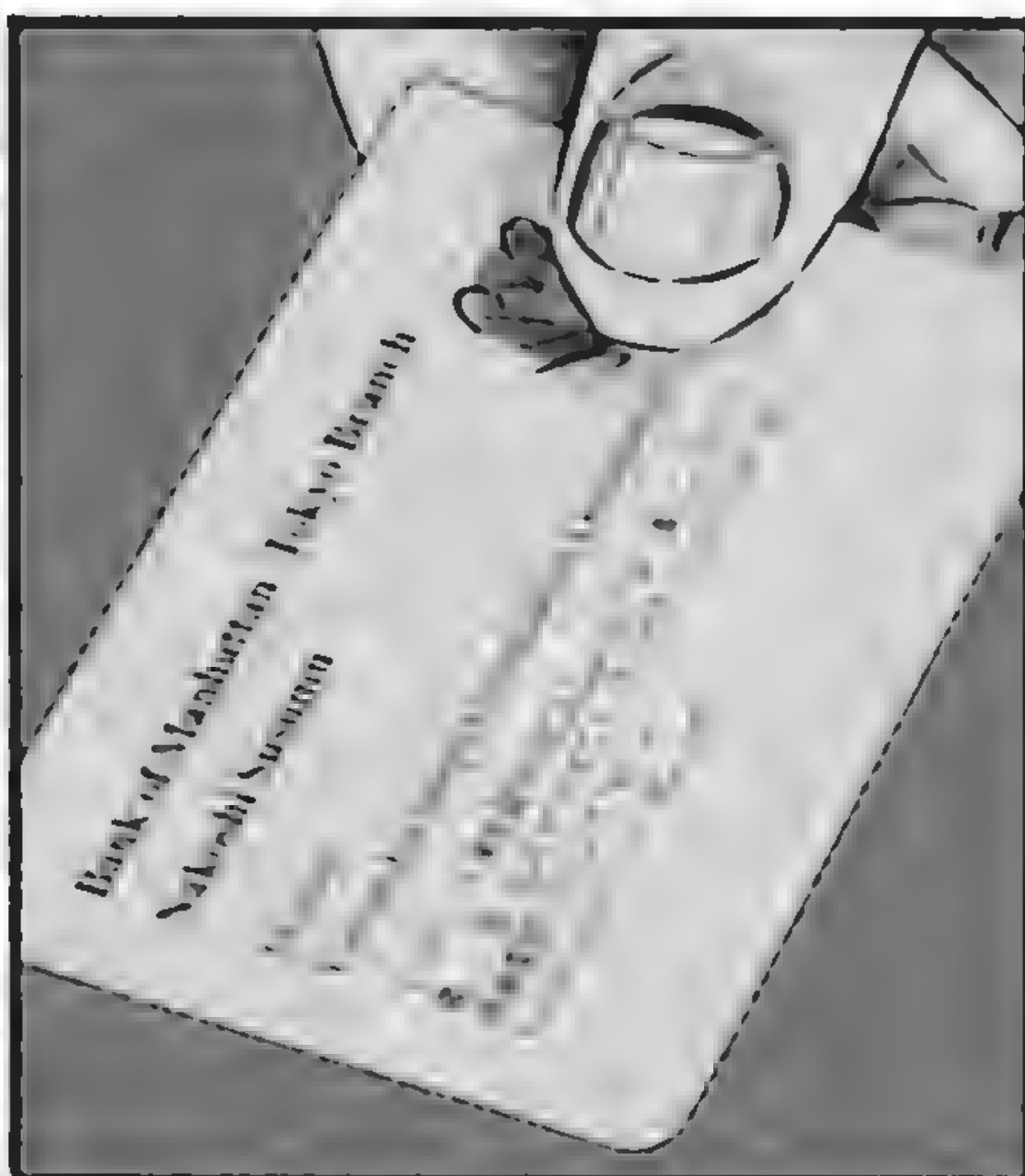
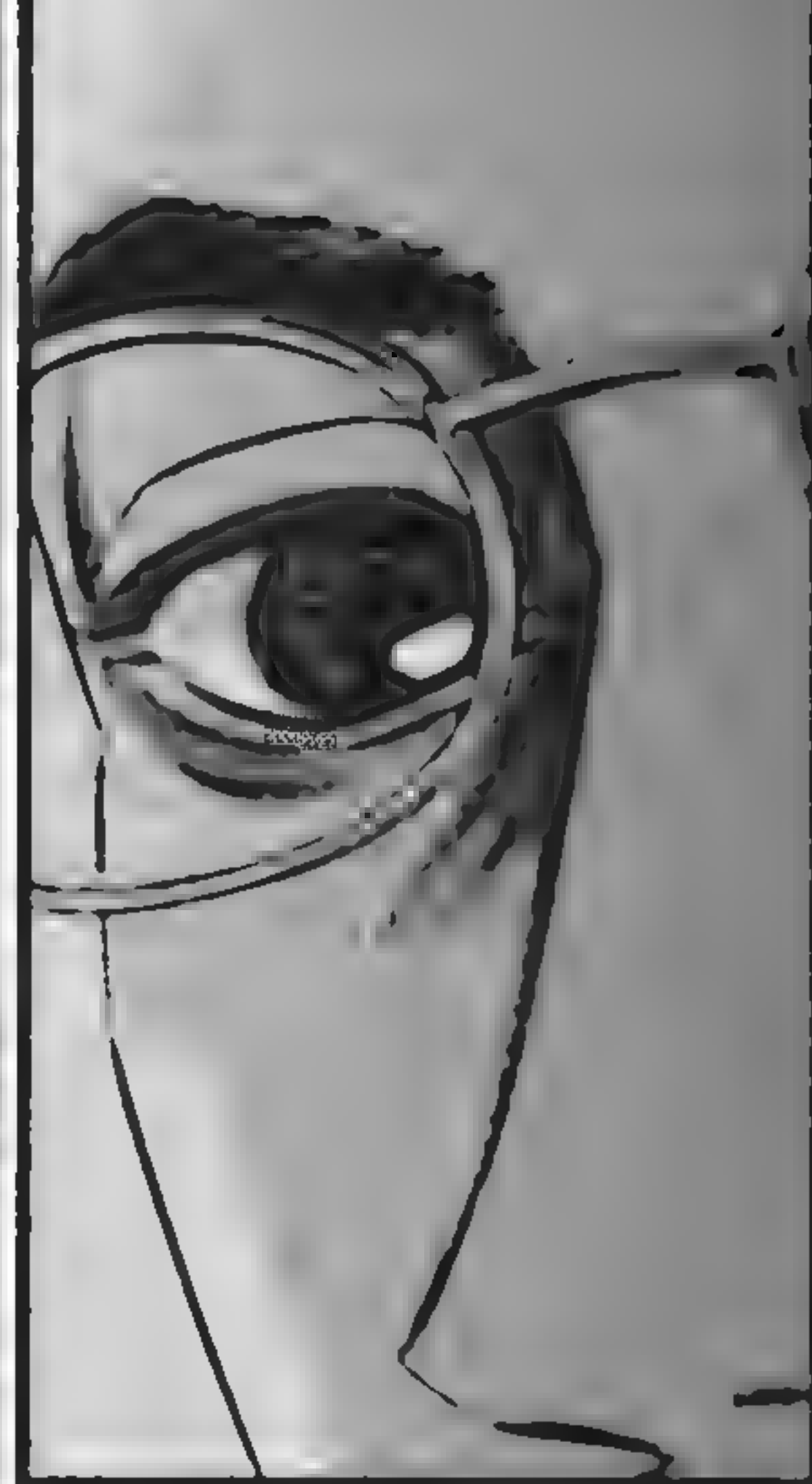












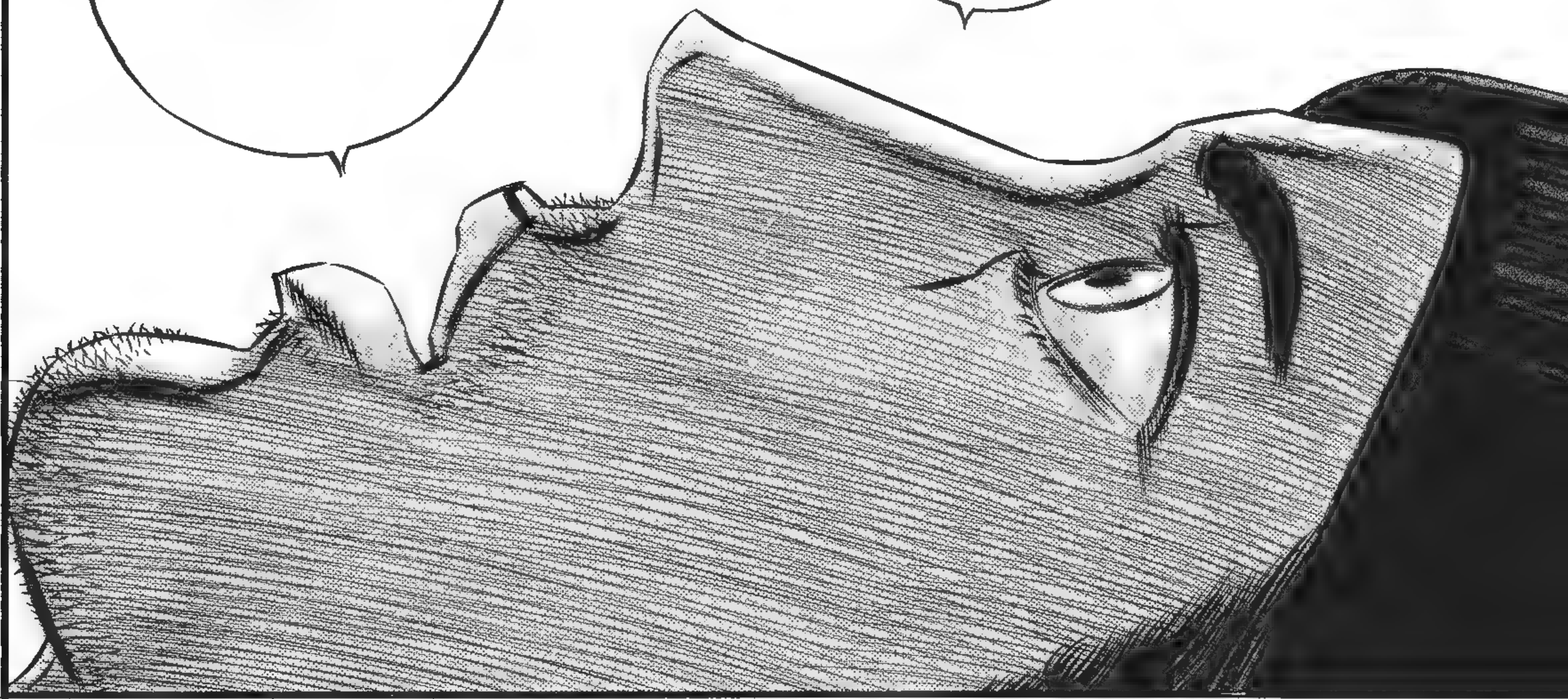




AND AYA  
INTRODUCED  
US.

WE DID MEET  
IN KAZU'S  
HIGH-RISE  
APARTMENT.

SHE'S  
RIGHT.



NANAMI...?

HER  
NAME  
WAS...











YOU GAVE  
ME YOUR  
WORD YOU  
WOULDN'T  
DO IT  
YOURSELF!

YOU ARE  
COM-  
PLETLY  
INSANE.



.....  
!



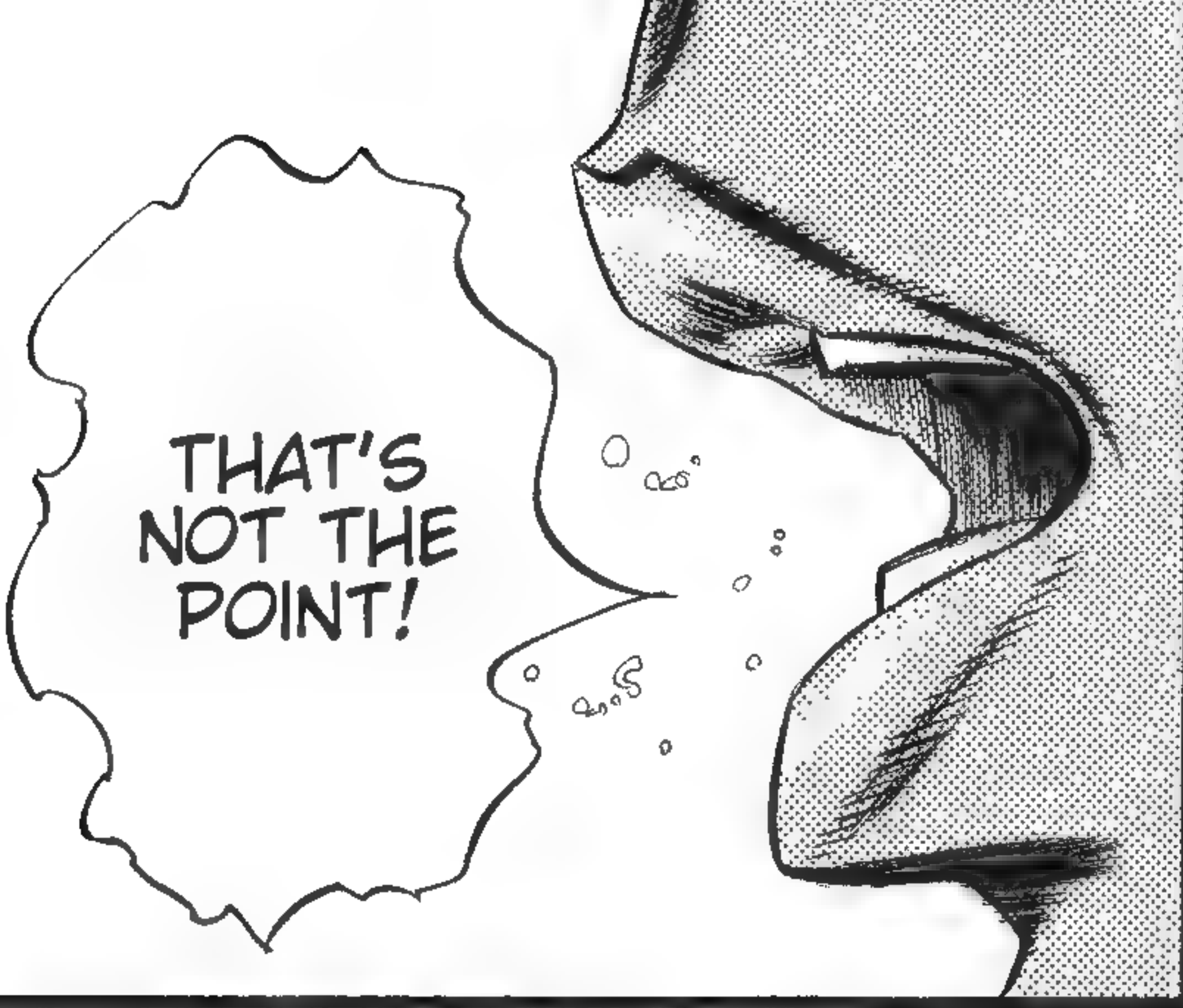
AND AFTER I  
TOLD YOU A  
MILLION TIMES  
HOW UNBELIEV-  
ABLY, STUPIDLY  
DANGEROUS IT'D  
BE... MORON.



YOU JUST  
LET IT FESTER TILL  
THE WHOLE THING  
WAS SO INFLAMED  
AND FILLED WITH  
PUS YOU BROKE OUT  
IN A FEVER. LITTLE  
WONDER YOU WERE  
OUT COLD FOR  
TWO DAYS.

DIDN'T EVEN  
BOTHR TO  
SEW IT UP  
PROPERLY...



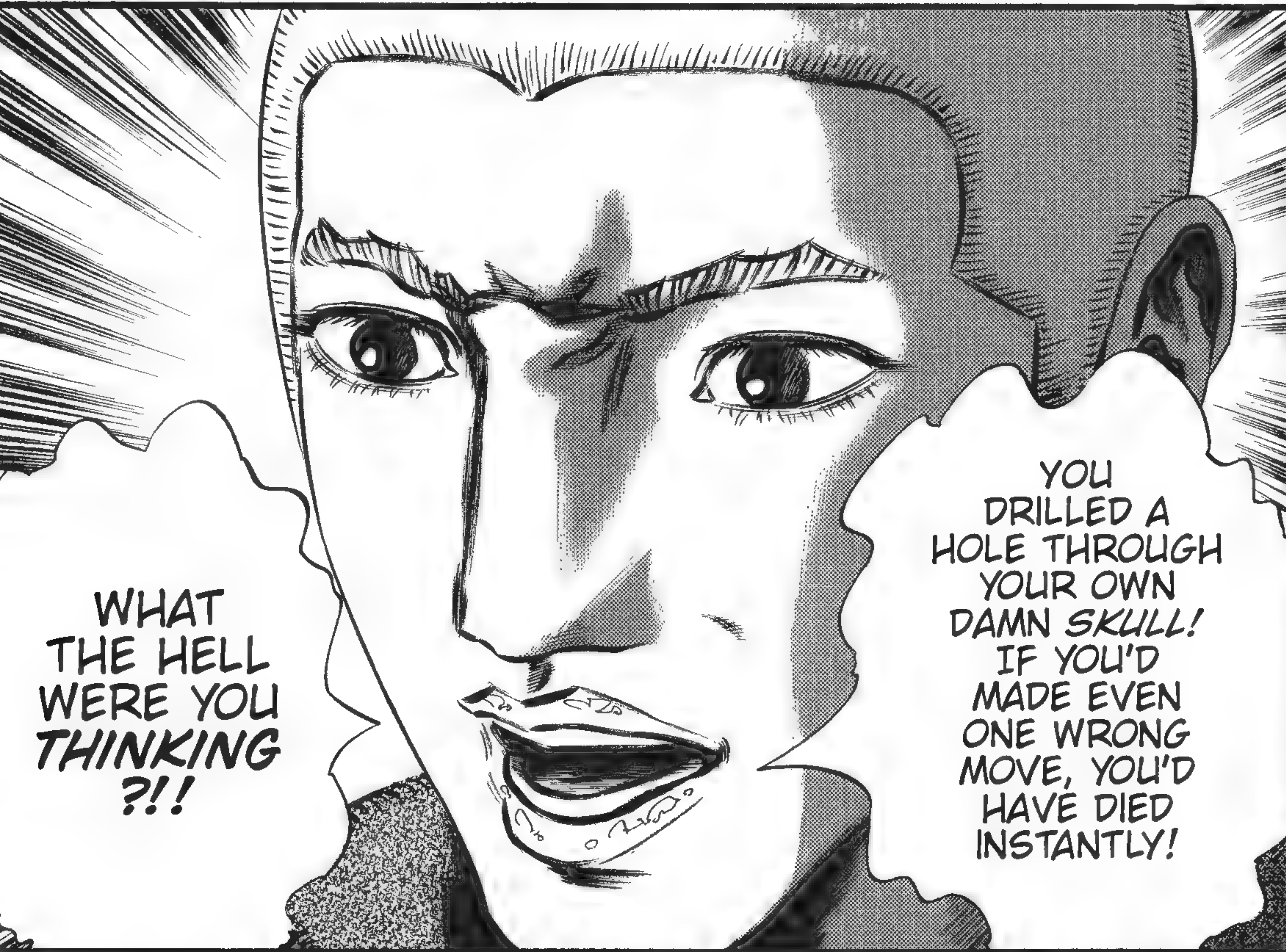


THAT'S  
NOT THE  
POINT!



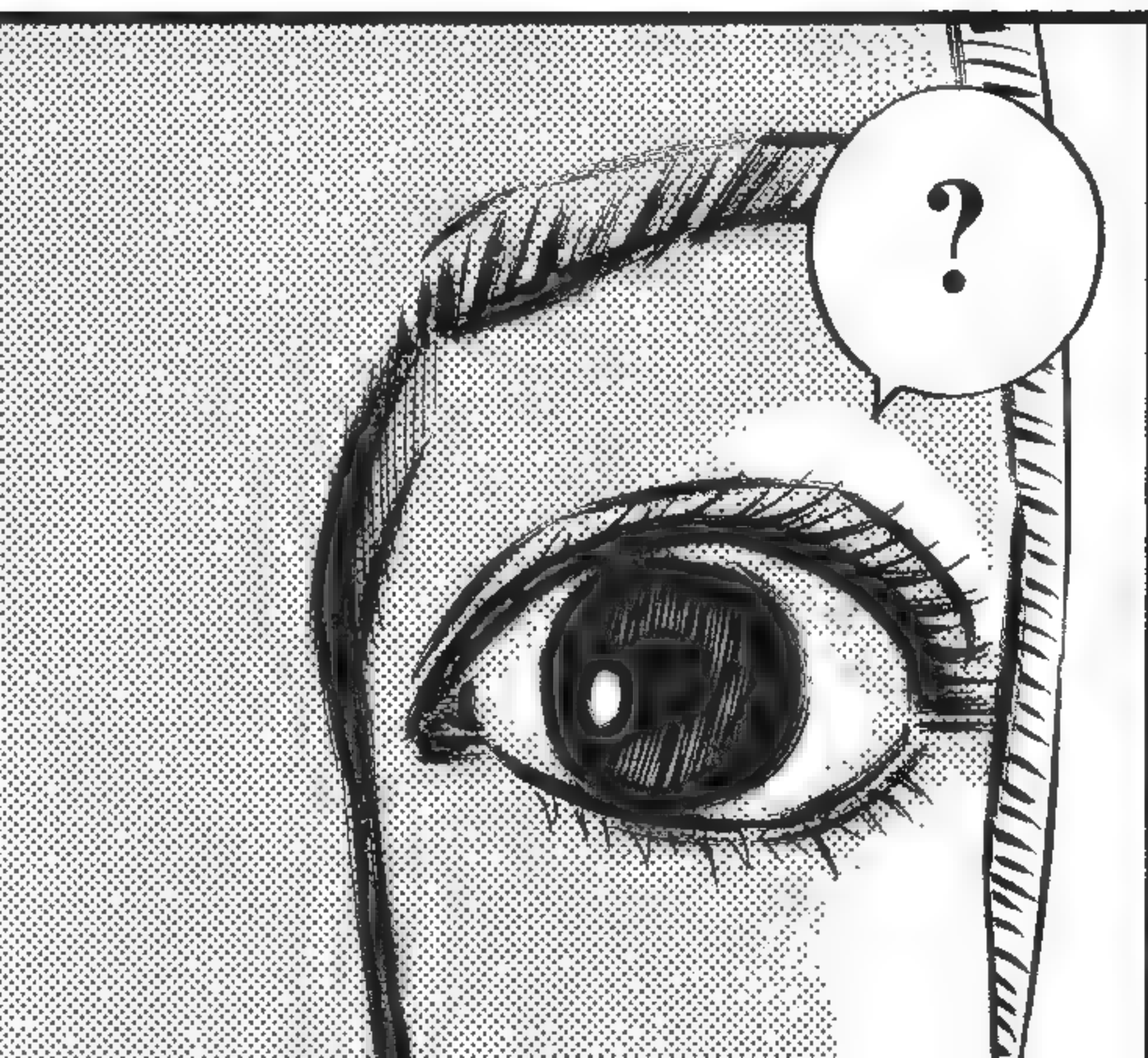
I WAS  
OUT...

FOR TWO  
WHOLE  
DAYS?



WHAT  
THE HELL  
WERE YOU  
THINKING  
?!!

YOU  
DRILLED A  
HOLE THROUGH  
YOUR OWN  
DAMN SKULL!  
IF YOU'D  
MADE EVEN  
ONE WRONG  
MOVE, YOU'D  
HAVE DIED  
INSTANTLY!



?

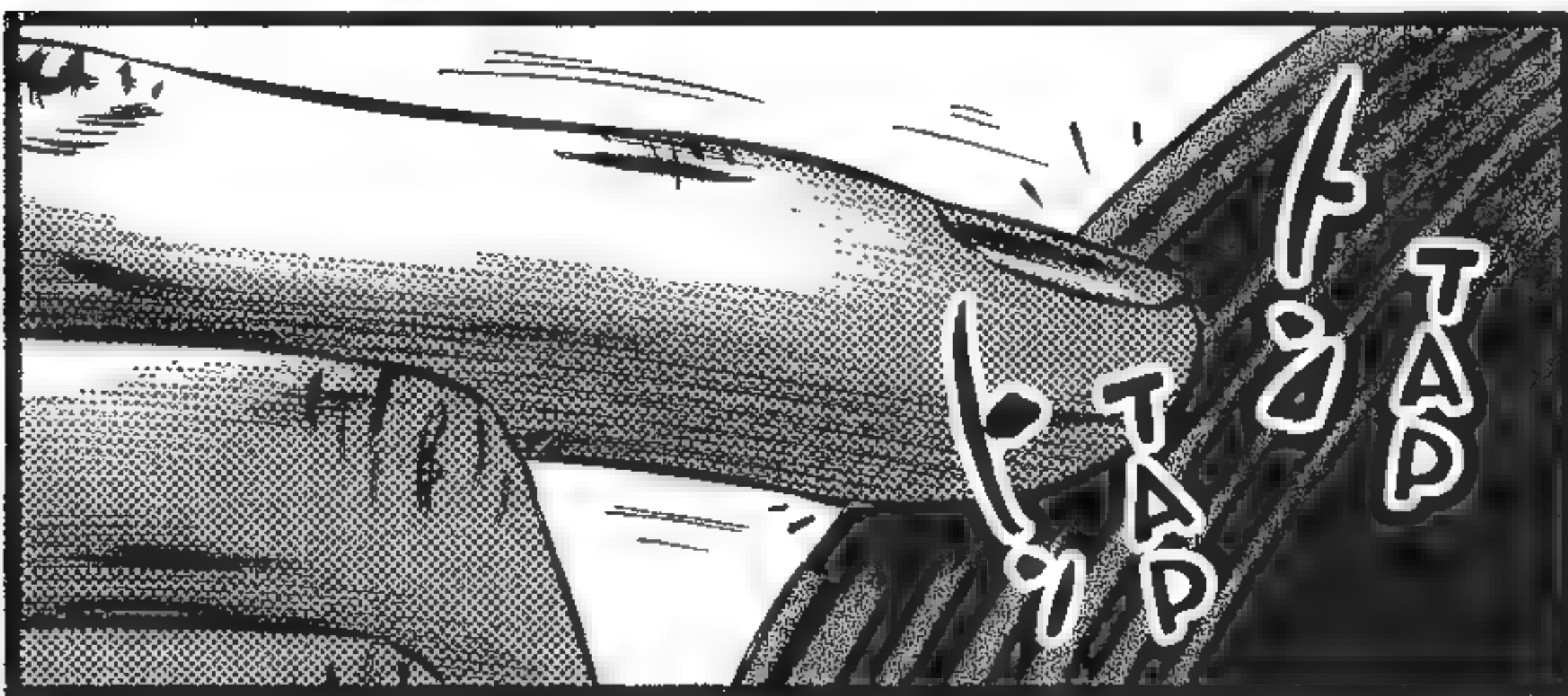


SMIRK...





?!

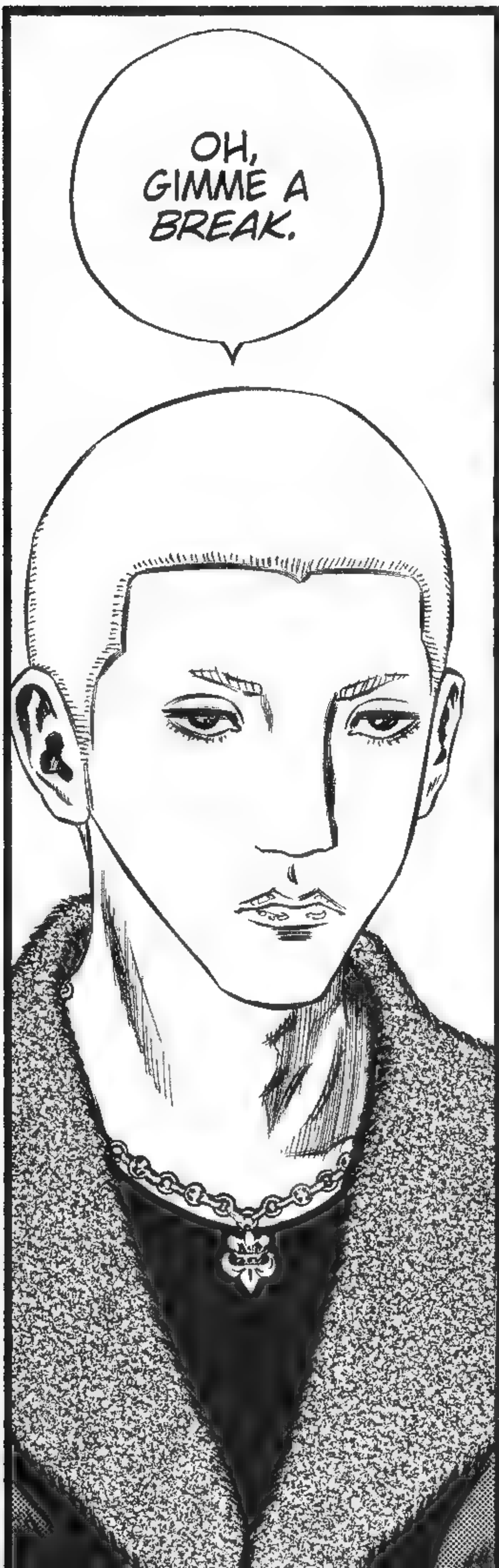


TAP TAP TAP



BUT IT WORKED.

I CAN SEE THEM AGAIN.



OH, GIMME A BREAK.



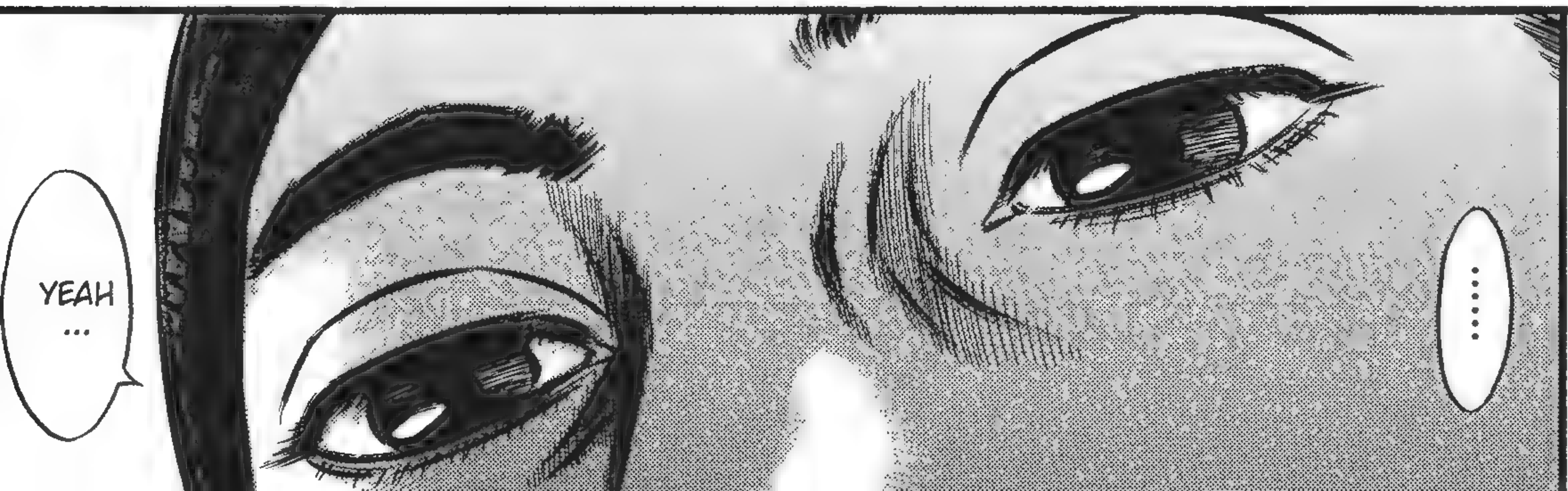
THEY'RE BACK, AND IT'S ALL THANKS TO THIS.





THAT WOMAN  
YOU WERE  
TALKING  
ABOUT WHOSE  
FACE KEEPS  
CHANGING?

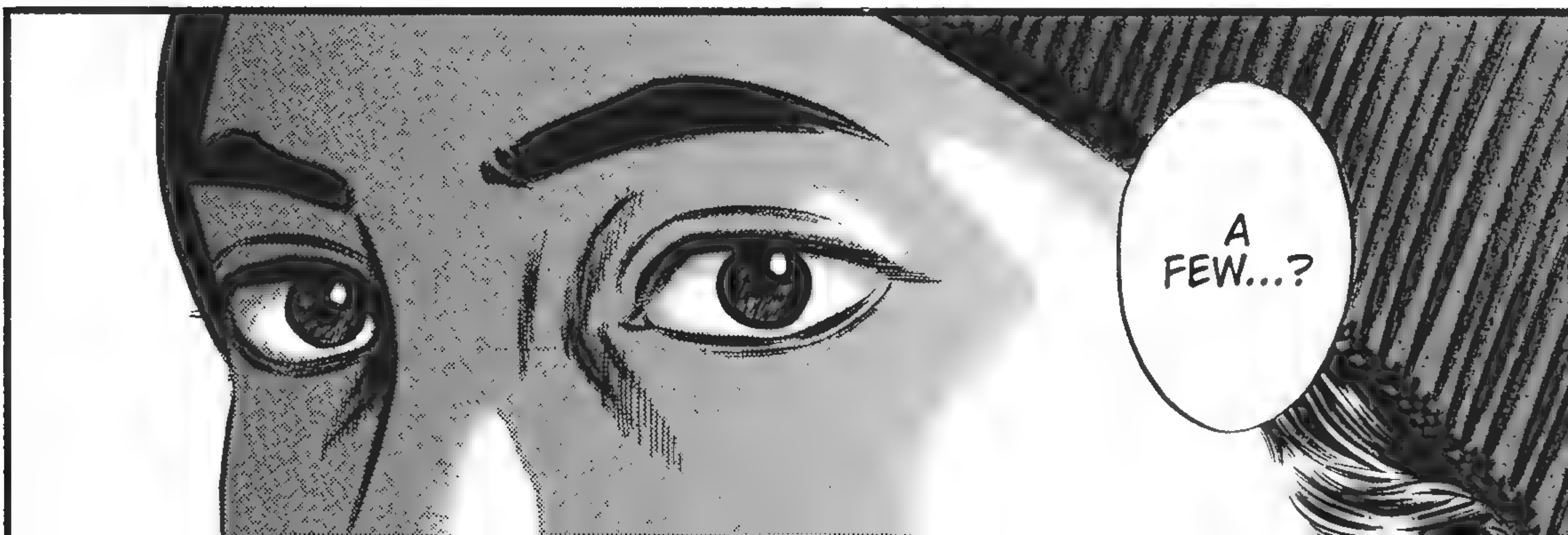
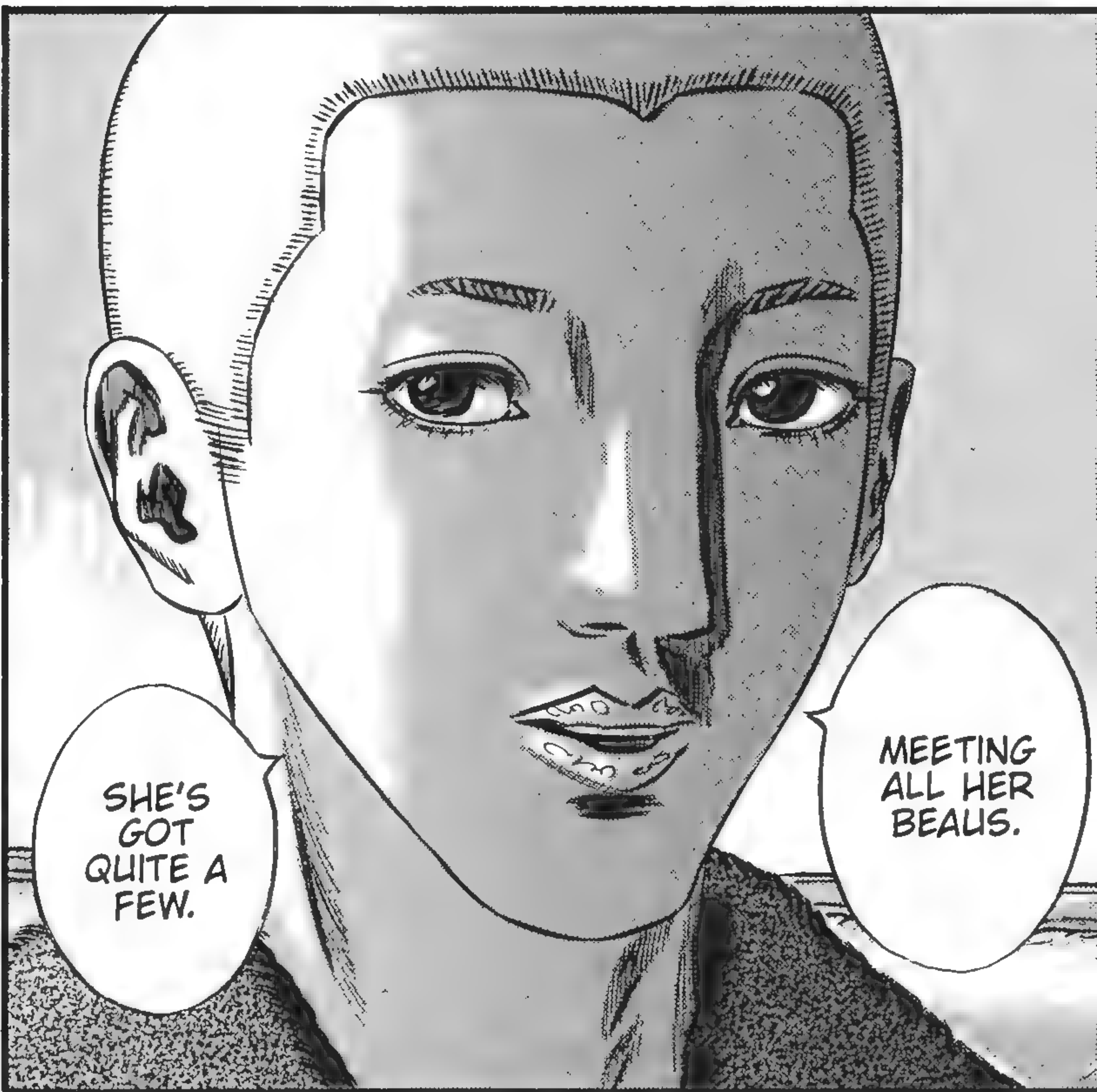
THIS  
IS HER,  
RIGHT?



YEAH  
...

...

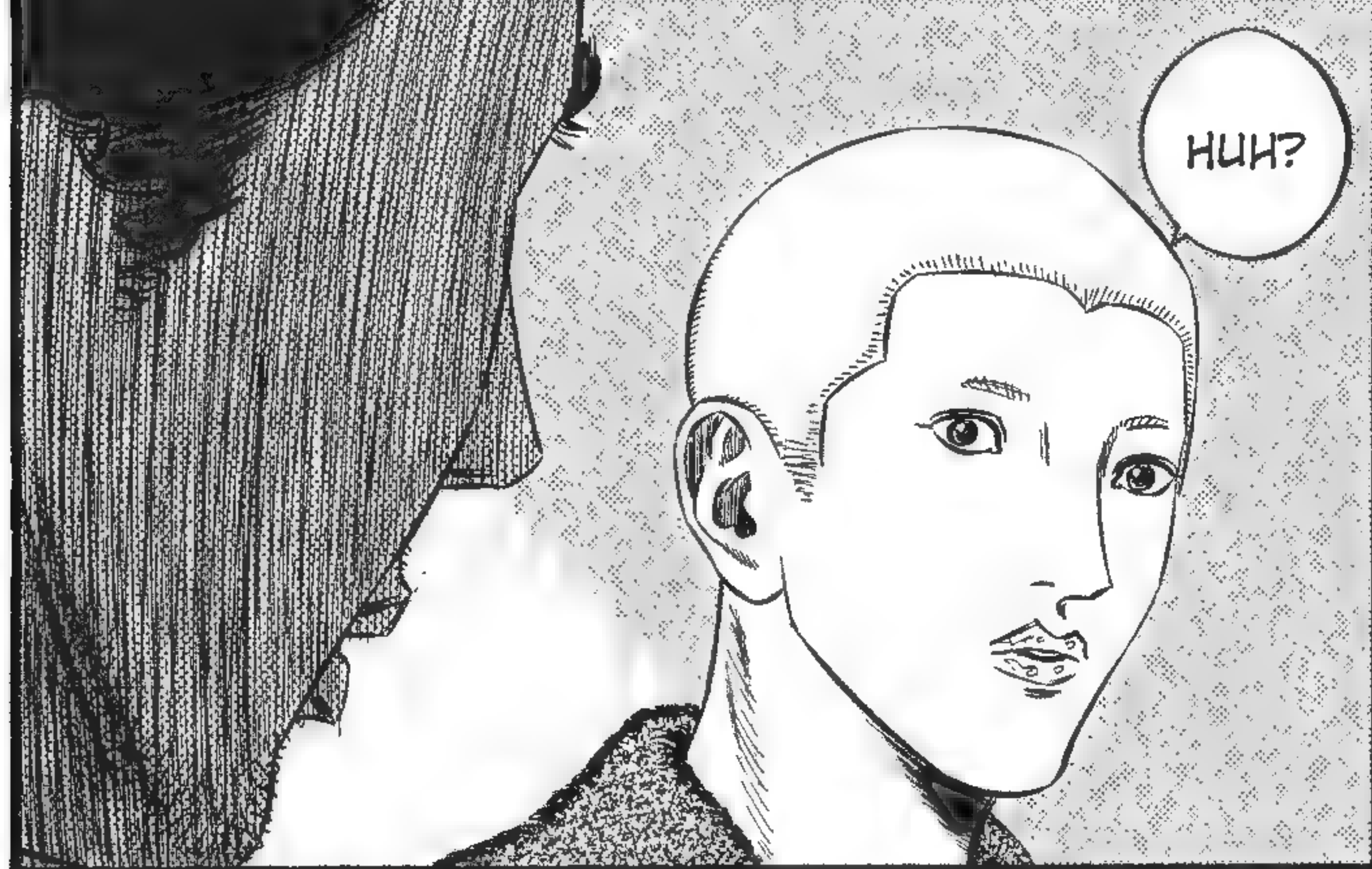












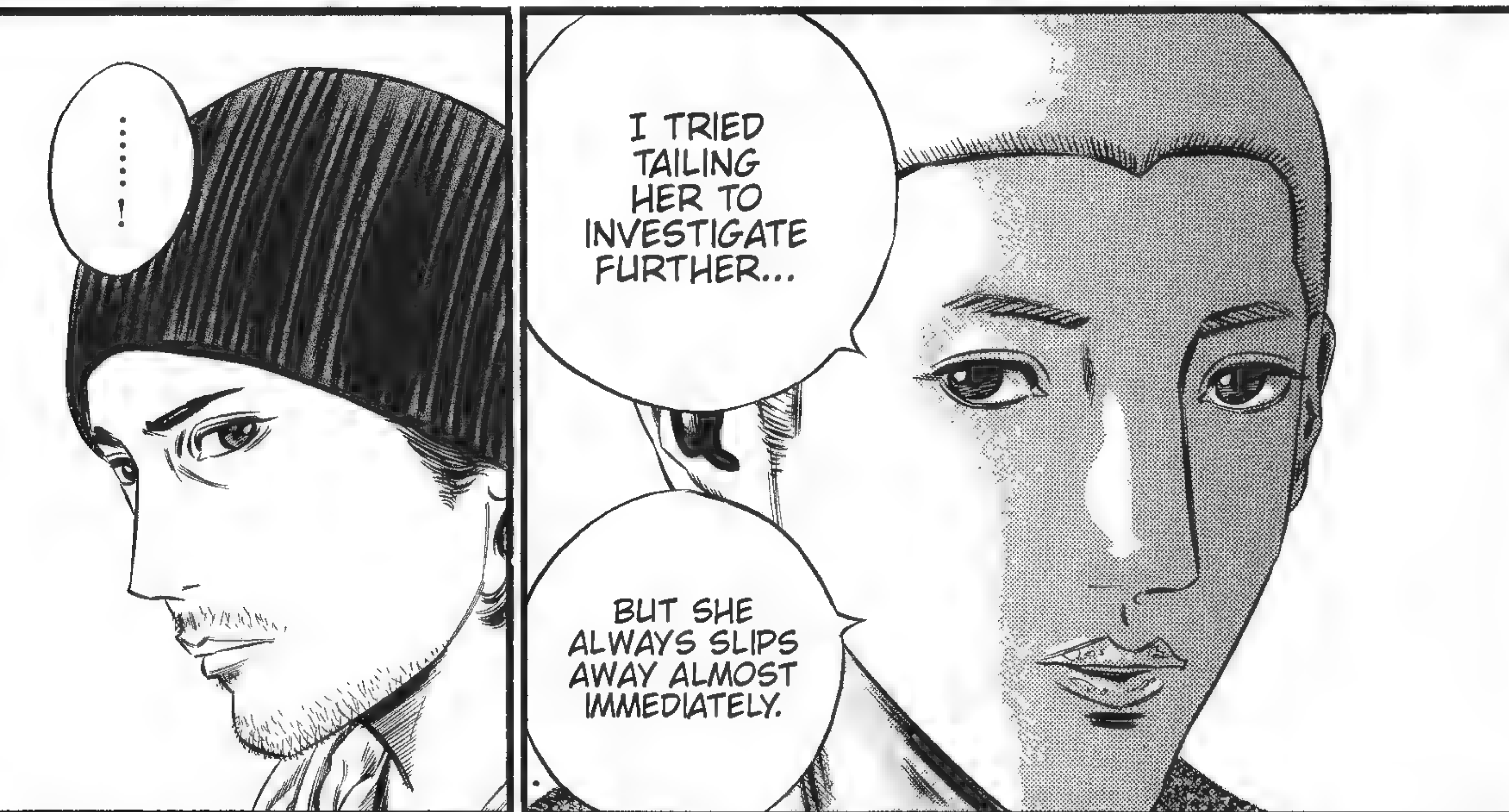




BUT YOU'D BE  
SURPRISED  
HOW HIGH HER  
GUARD IS.

SEEMS  
CARELESS  
...

?



I TRIED  
TAILING  
HER TO  
INVESTIGATE  
FURTHER...

BUT SHE  
ALWAYS SLIPS  
AWAY ALMOST  
IMMEDIATELY.



NANAMI  
...



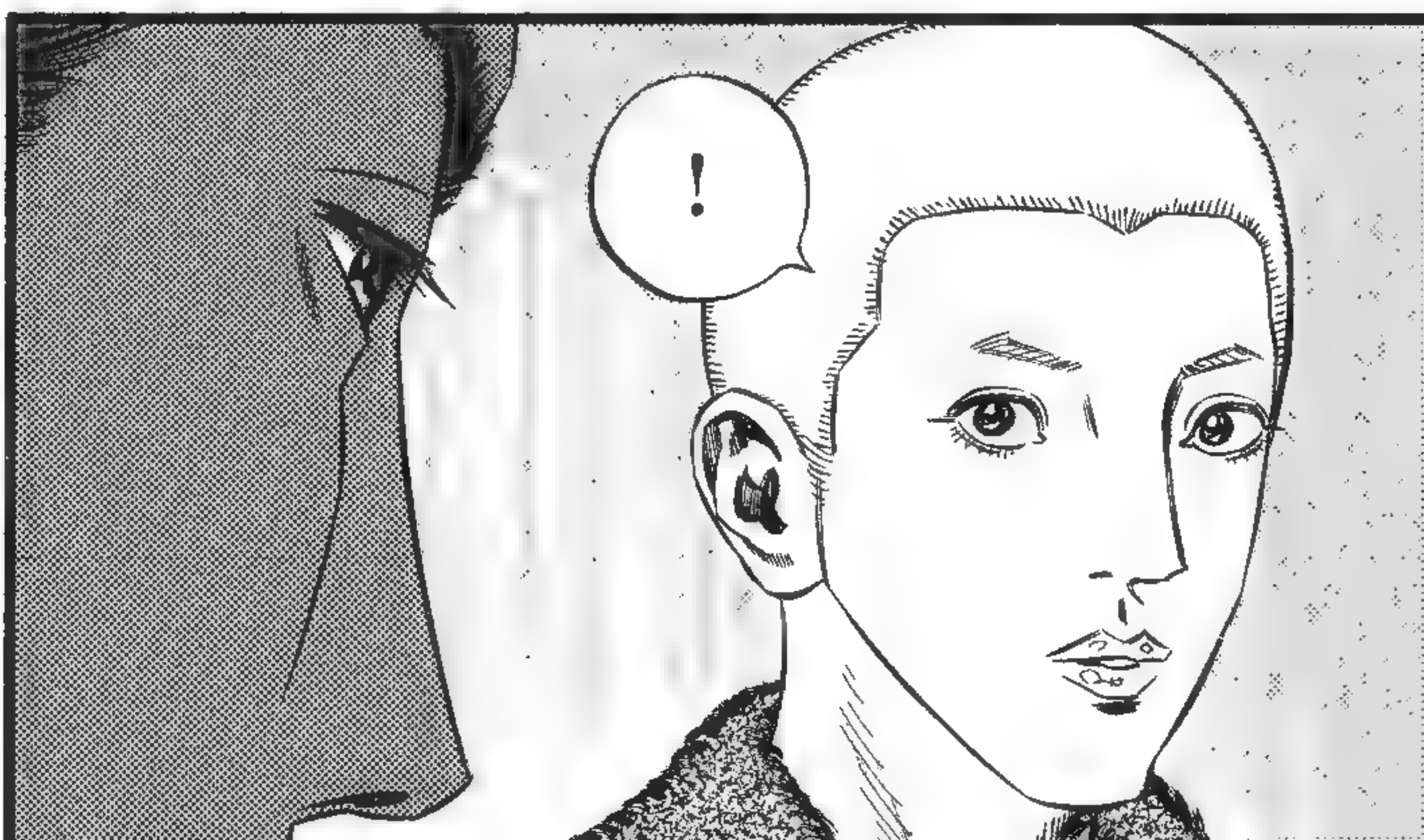
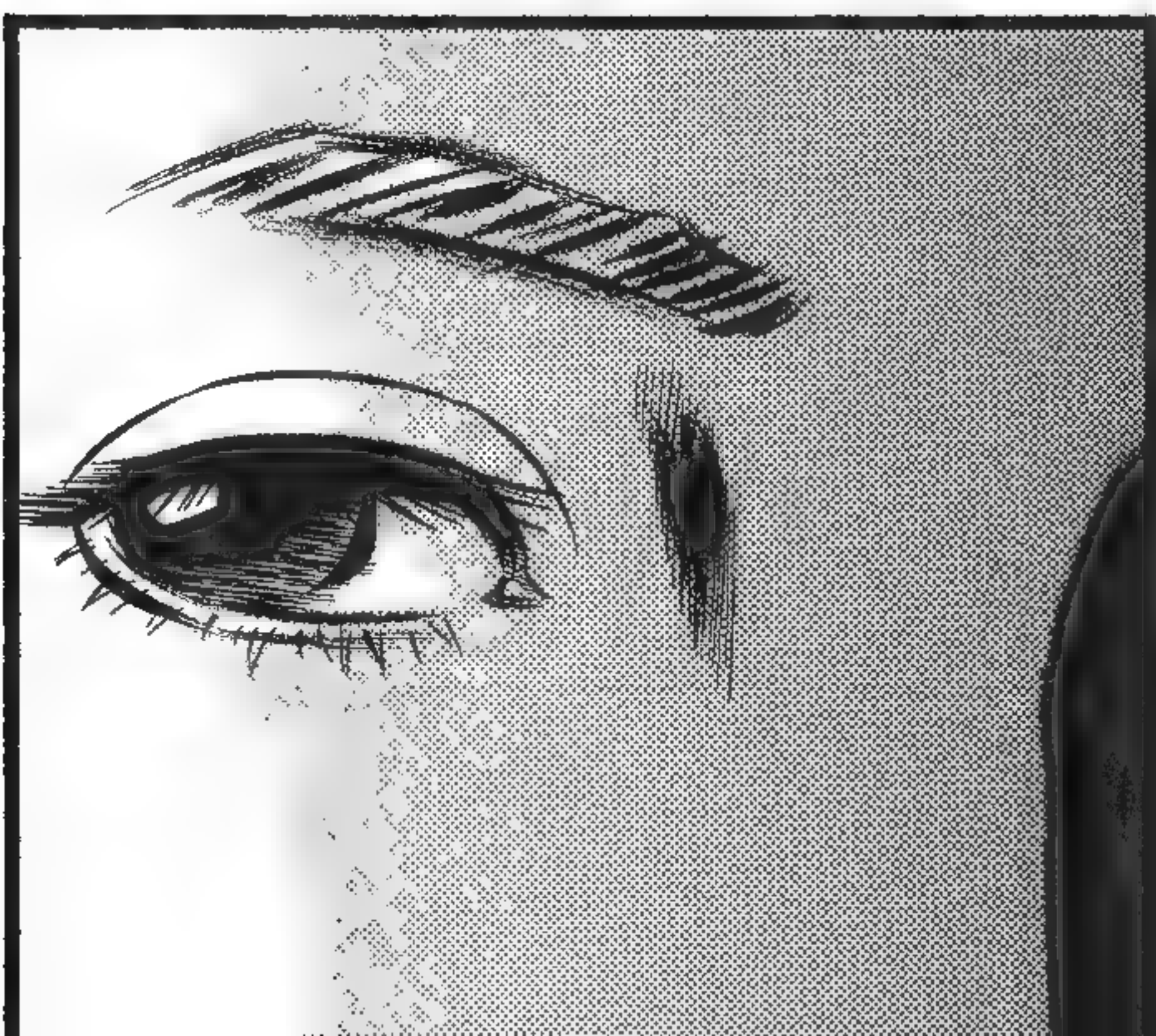
PARDON?



NOT HER  
NAME, HER  
AGE, HER  
ADDRESS...

AFTER ALL  
THIS TIME, I'VE  
GOT ALMOST  
NOTHING ON  
HER!









?

SO...WHAT  
HAPPENED  
BETWEEN  
YOU TWO?



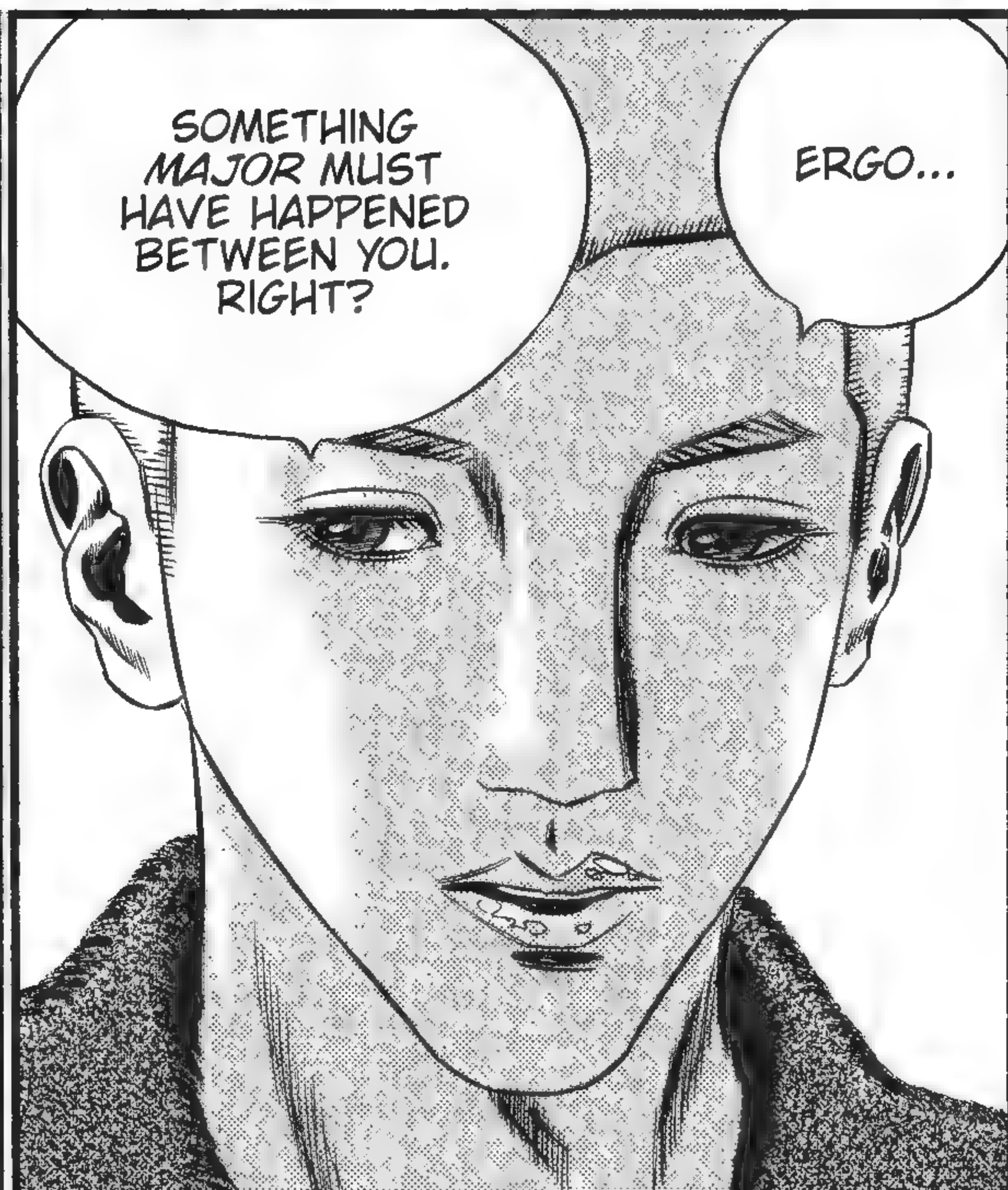
BUT SHE WAS  
THE ONLY ONE  
YOU STILL  
SAW AS A  
HOMUNCULUS  
...

EVEN AFTER  
ALL THE  
OTHERS  
DISAPPEARED.



SHE DIDN'T  
LEAVE  
MUCH OF AN  
IMPRESSION.

I KNOW  
YOU SAID  
THAT BACK  
THEN...



SOMETHING  
MAJOR MUST  
HAVE HAPPENED  
BETWEEN YOU.  
RIGHT?

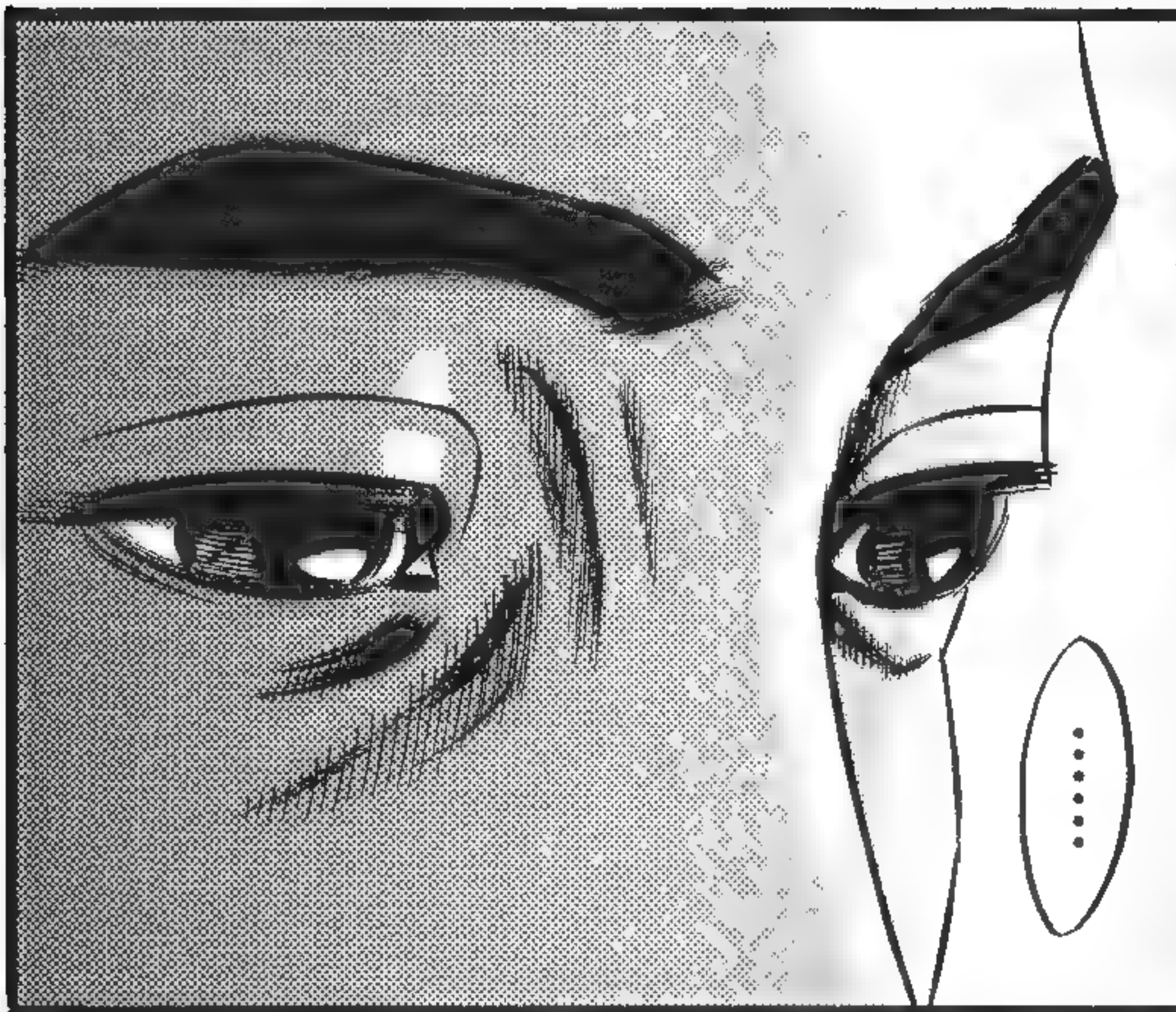
ERGO...

.....

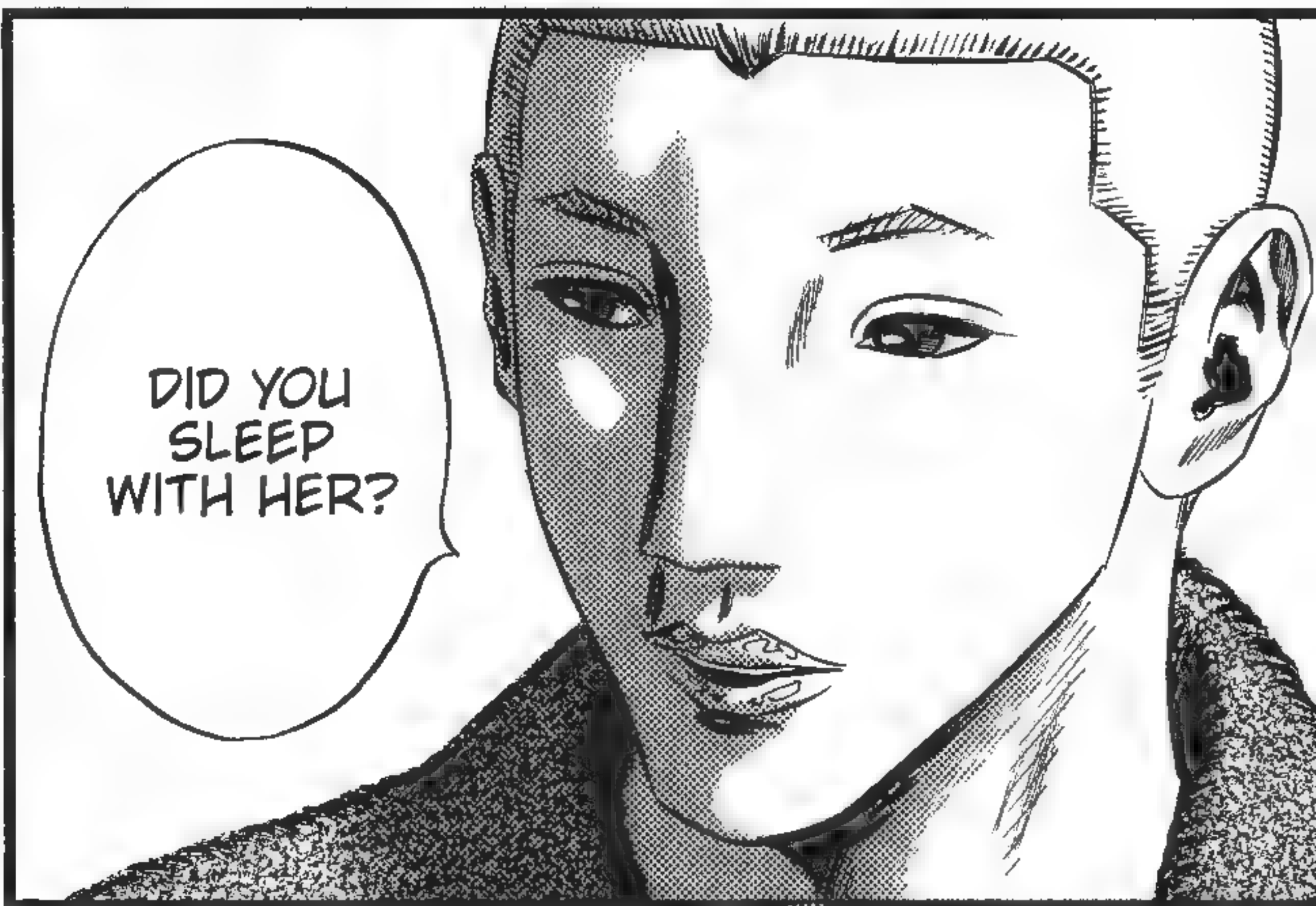




ALL I CAN  
REMEMBER IS THAT  
SOME GIRL I WAS  
MESSING AROUND  
WITH AT WORK  
INTRODUCED ME TO  
HER AT A HOUSE  
PARTY.



DID YOU  
SLEEP  
WITH HER?



NOT  
SURE?!  
FOR GOD'S  
SAKE...



I'M NOT  
SURE.





WHAT  
DO YOU  
MEAN?



?!

DID HER FACE  
LOOK THE  
SAME BACK  
THEN?



IN ANY  
CASE...



I MEAN,  
SHE'S HAD  
WORK  
DONE...

JUST  
LIKE  
YOU.



!!

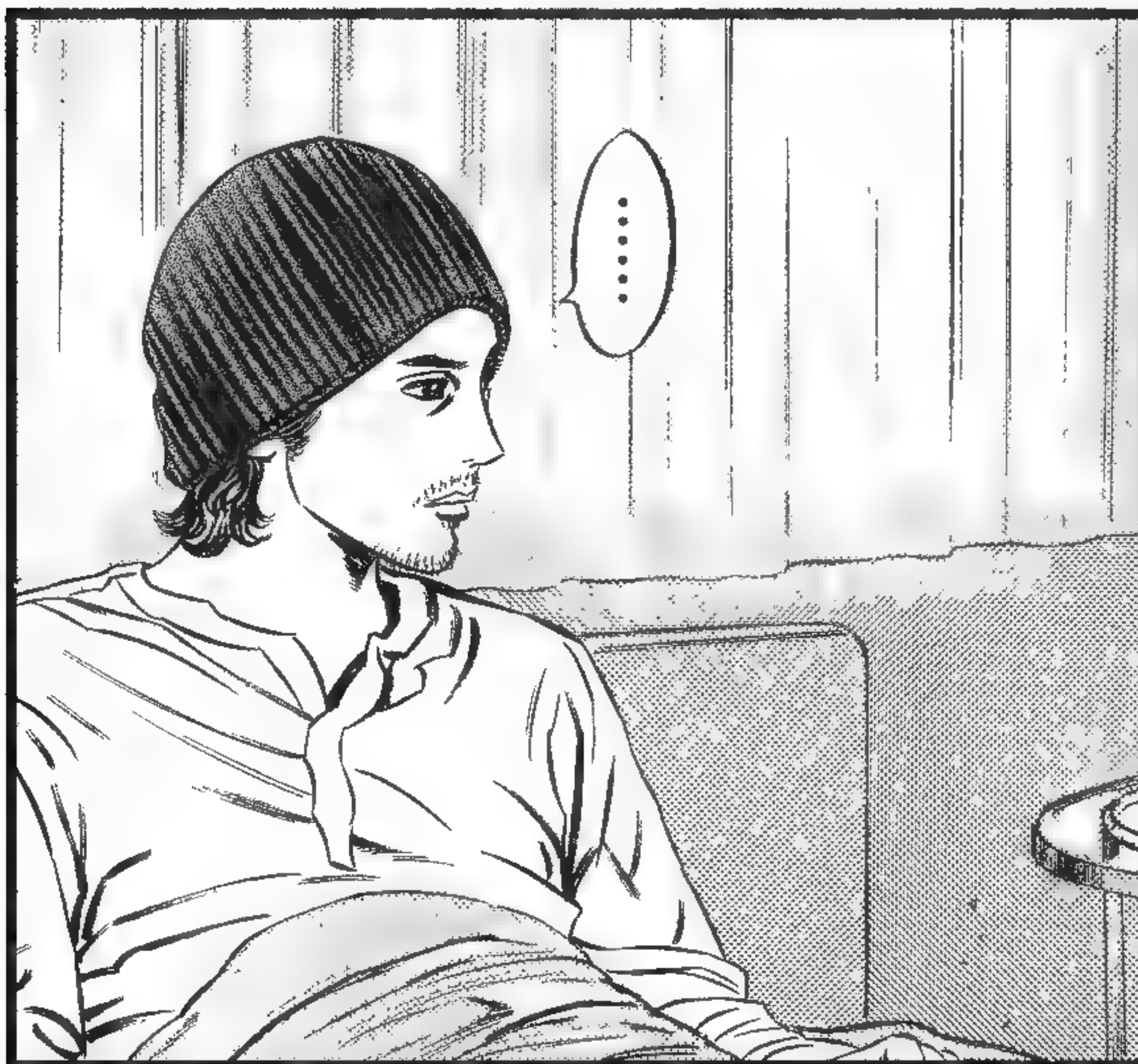




A BONA  
FIDE  
CYBORG.



I CAN TELL.  
SHE'S MORE  
SILICONE  
THAN FLESH.



IF SHE'S HAD  
ALL HER REAL  
PARTS ADJUSTED,  
IT MAKES SENSE  
THAT YOU'D SEE  
HER WITH  
A THOUSAND  
FACES.

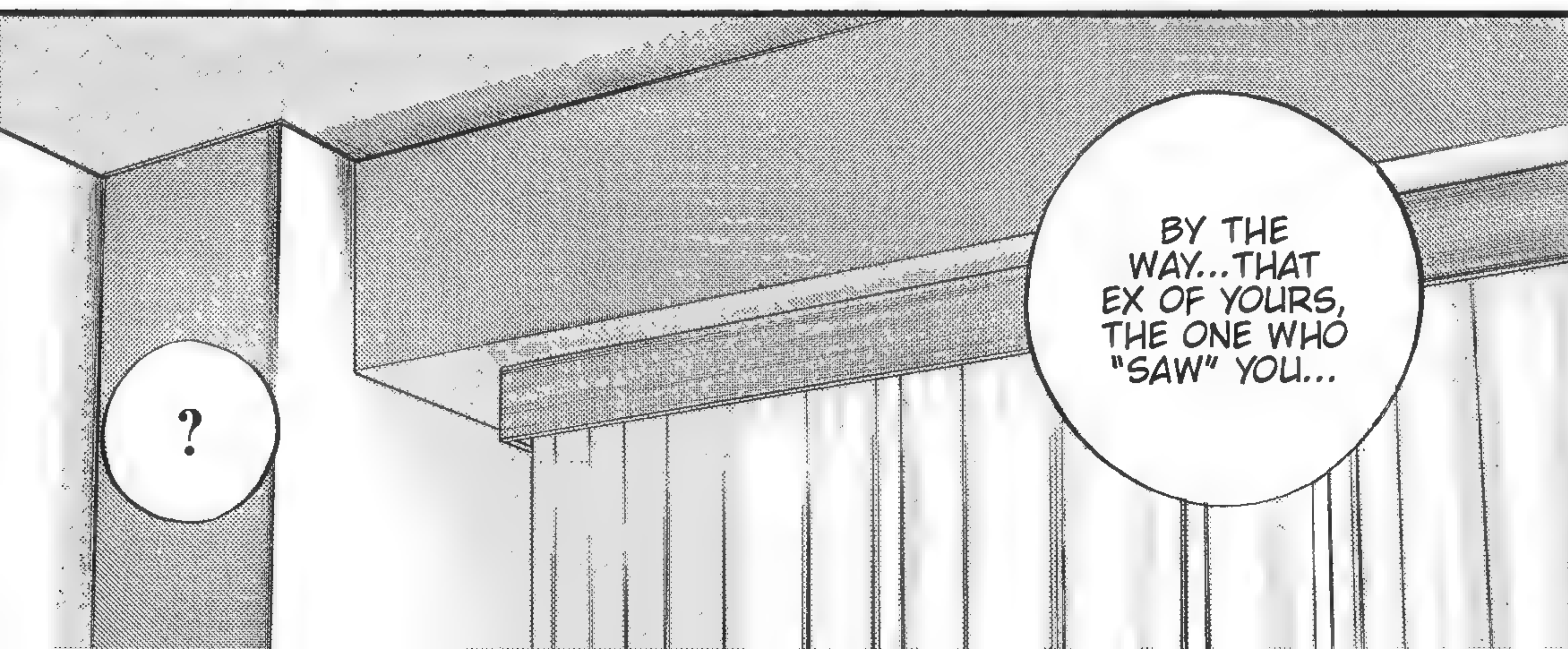


SHE NEVER FOUND  
LOVE OR MARRIED.  
SHE'S JUST SEEING  
GUY AFTER GUY,  
TRAPPED IN A LIMBO  
BETWEEN HUMAN  
CONNECTION AND  
LONELINESS.

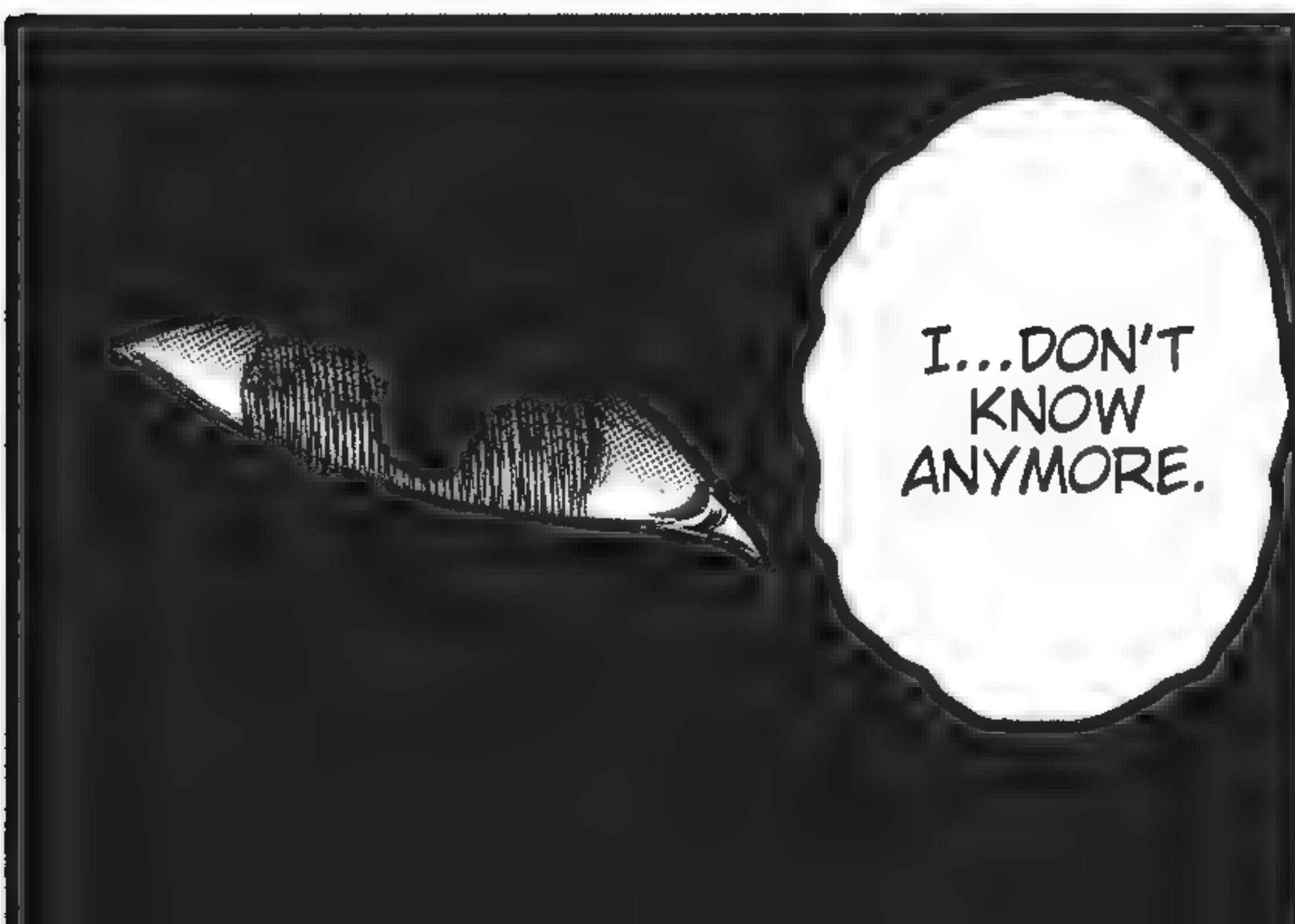
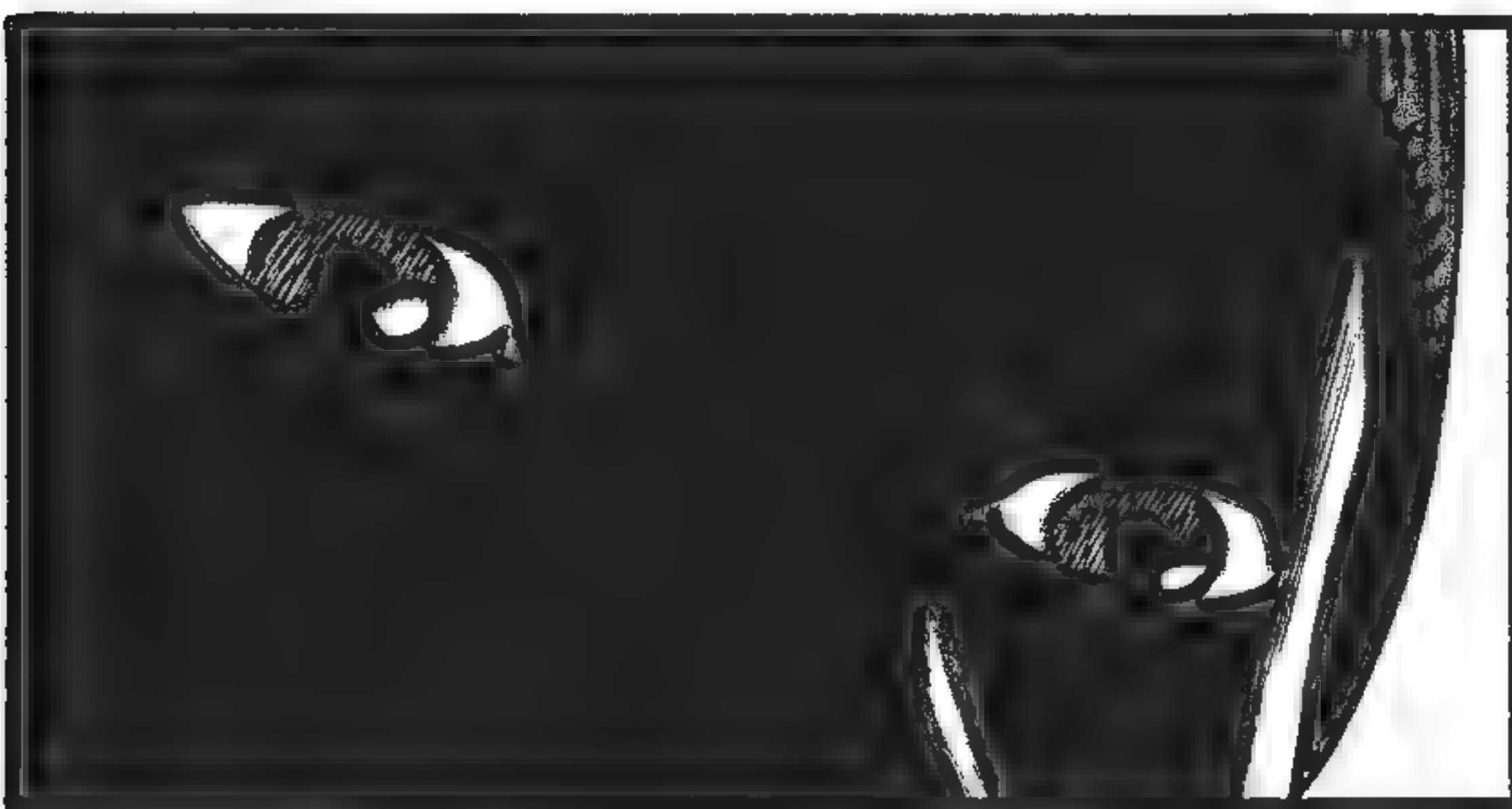
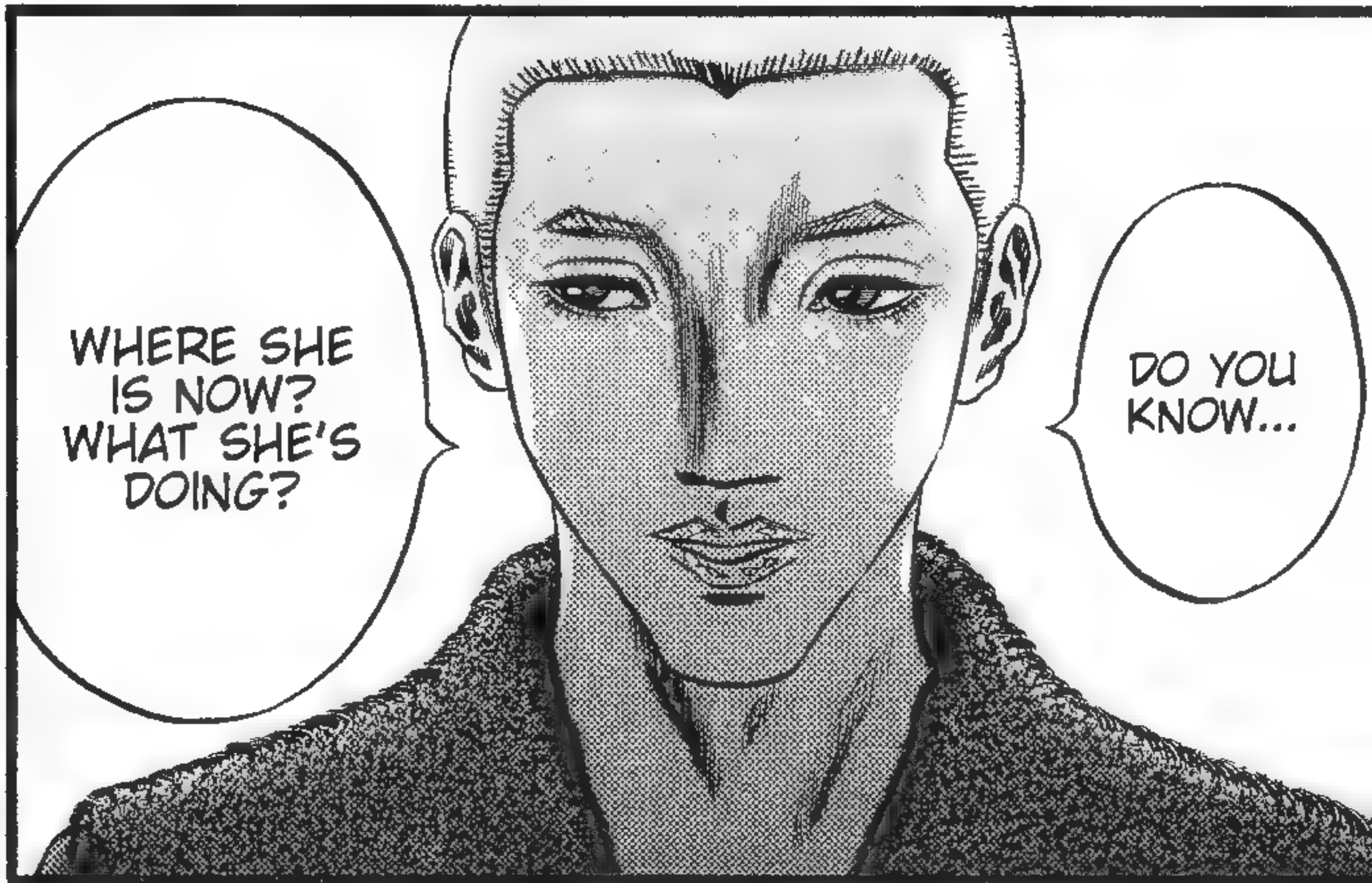


POOR THING.  
EVEN AFTER  
SURGERY...

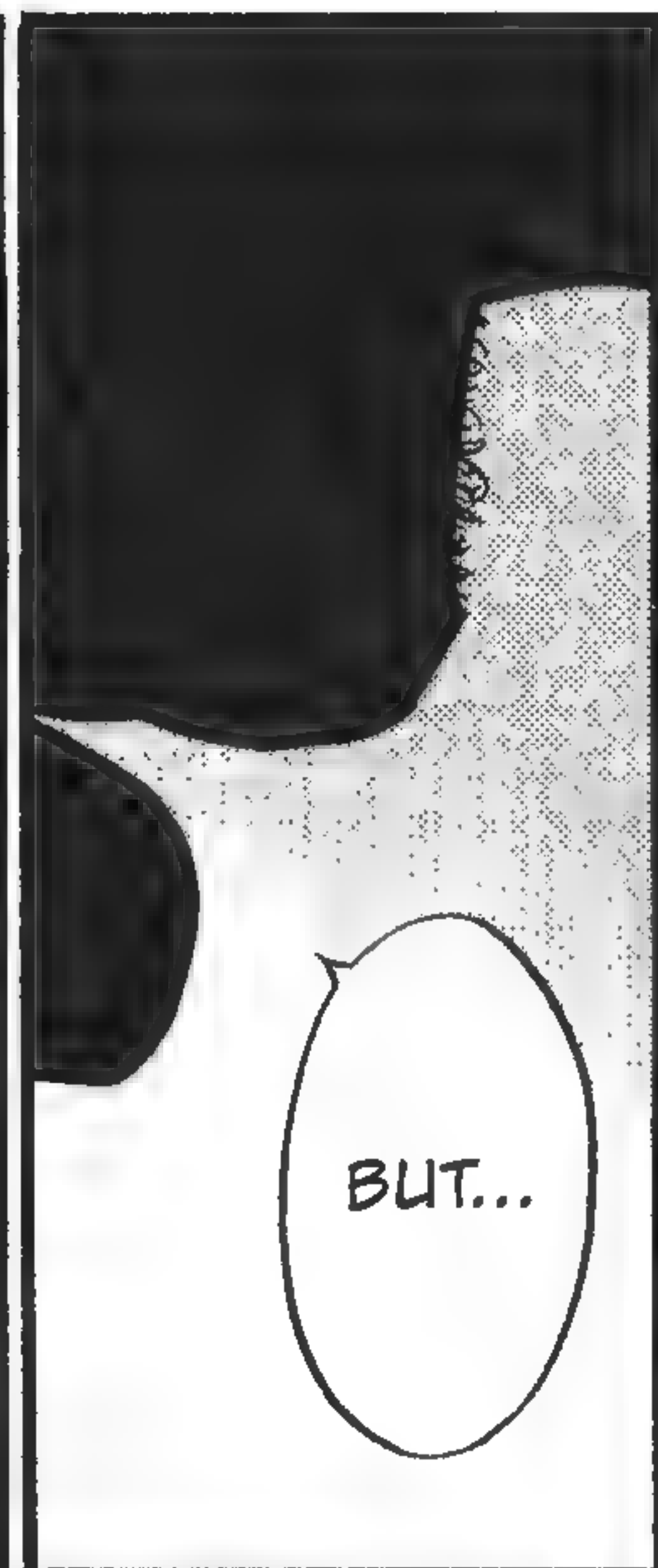




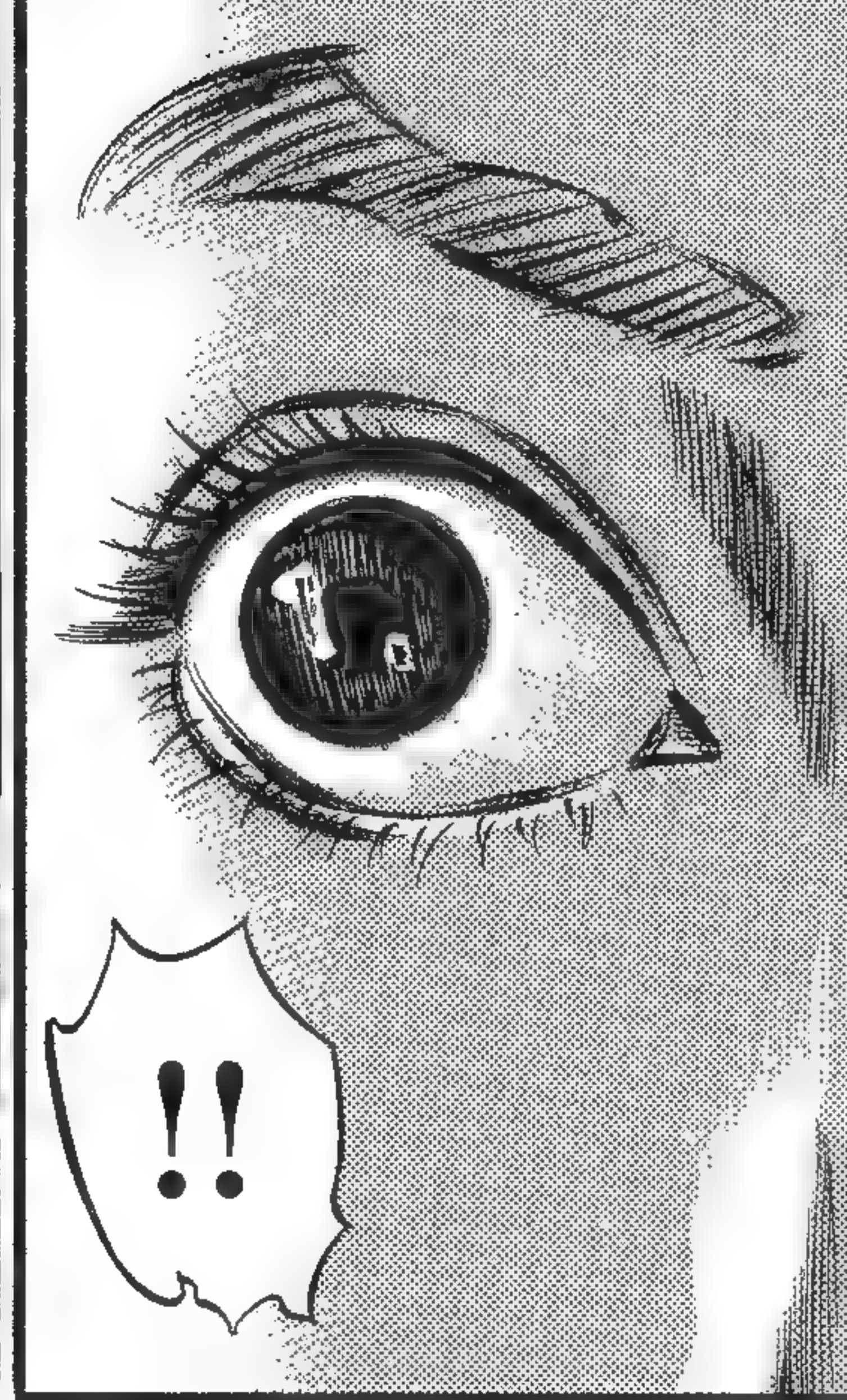




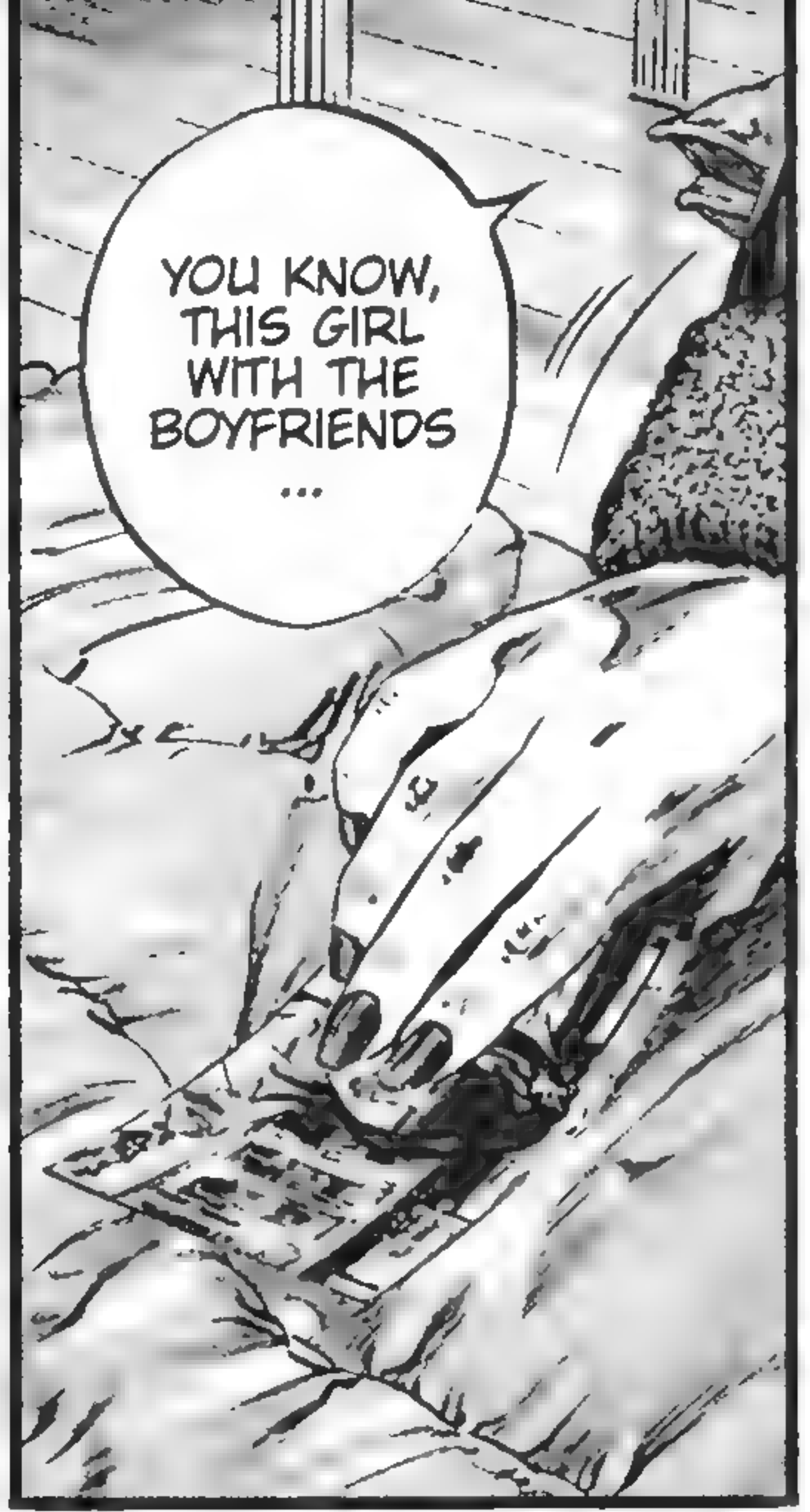
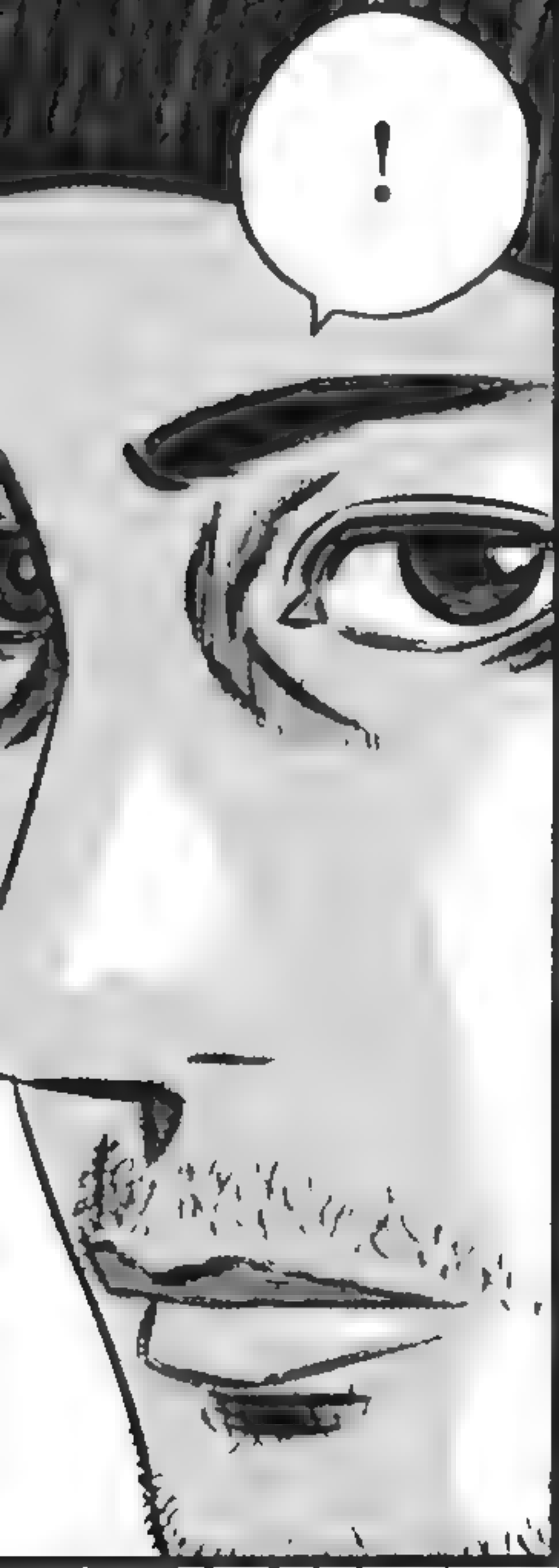




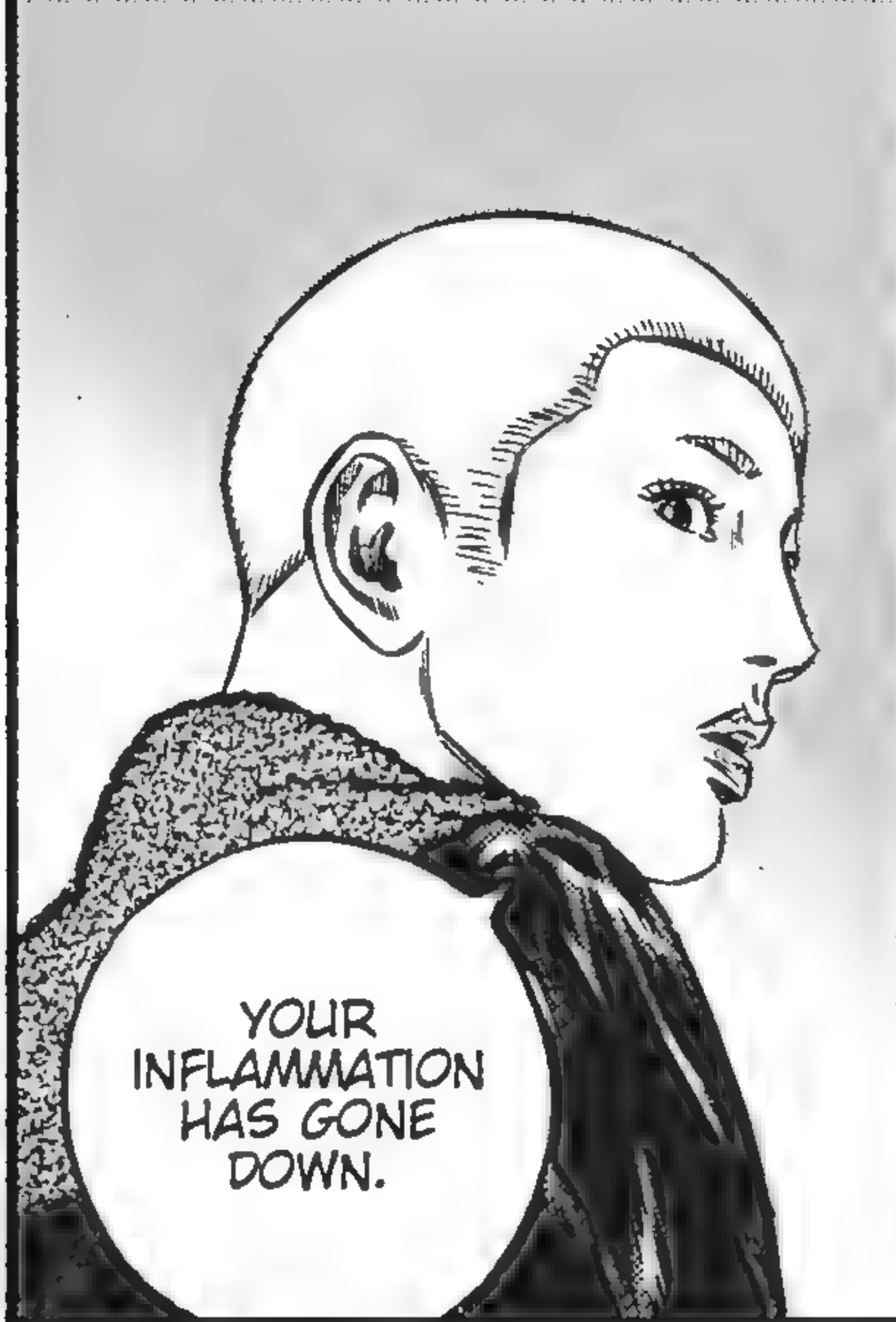












YOUR  
INFLAMMATION  
HAS GONE  
DOWN.



WELP.



AND I  
LEFT YOUR  
CAR IN THAT  
PARKING LOT.  
FILLED YOUR  
TANK TOO.



I HAD YOUR  
FAVORITE SUIT  
AND SHIRT  
DRY-CLEANED  
FOR YOU...



SORRY  
ABOUT  
THIS.



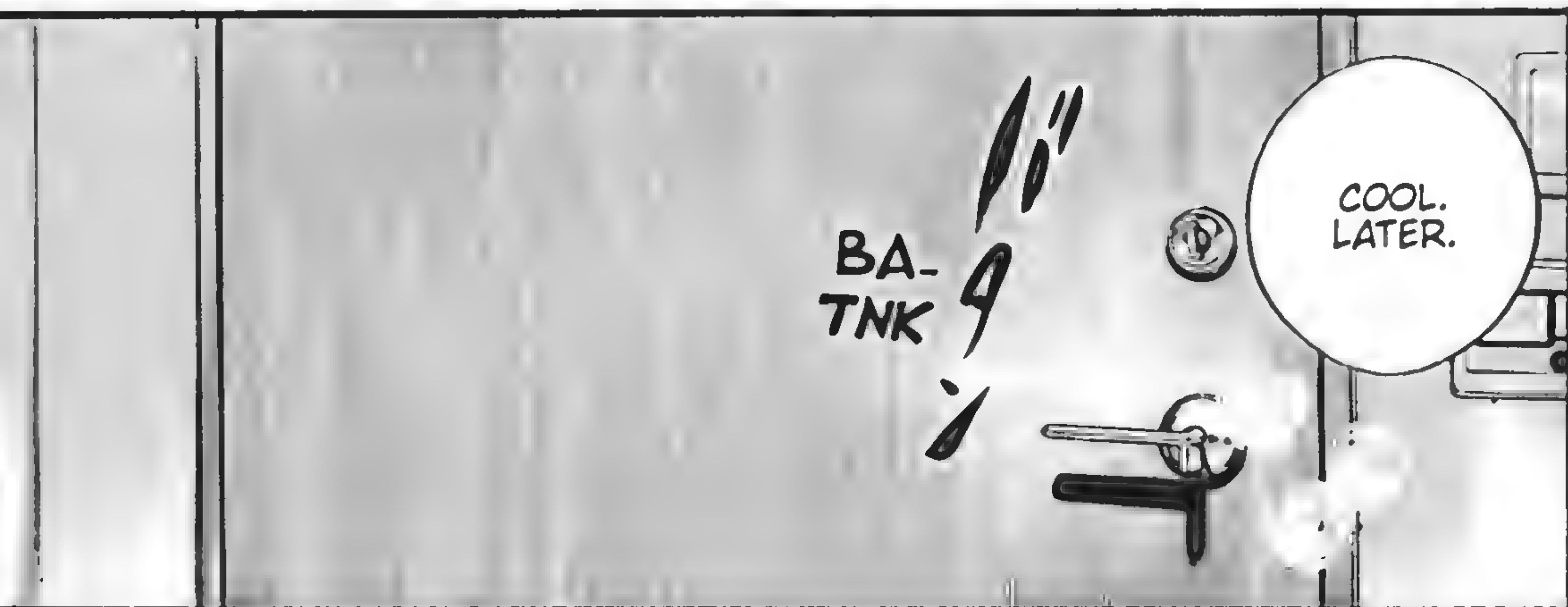


UH...

SURE.



INSIDE YOUR CAR, THERE'S A BLANKET AND A WEEK'S WORTH OF MEDICINE FOR YOUR HEAD. MAKE SURE YOU TAKE IT, OKAY?



BA-TNK

COOL. LATER.

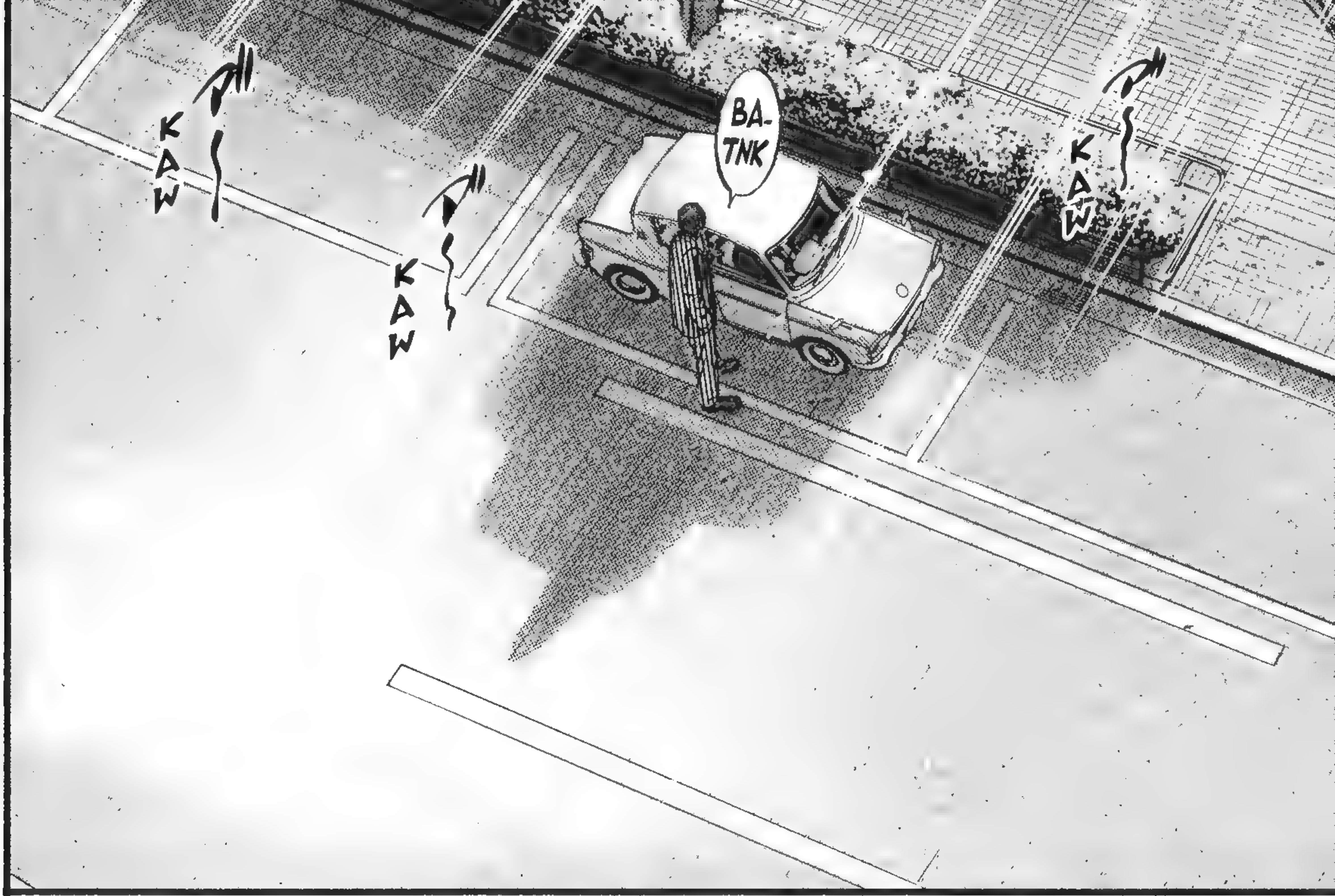


KAKA

KAKA

KAKA









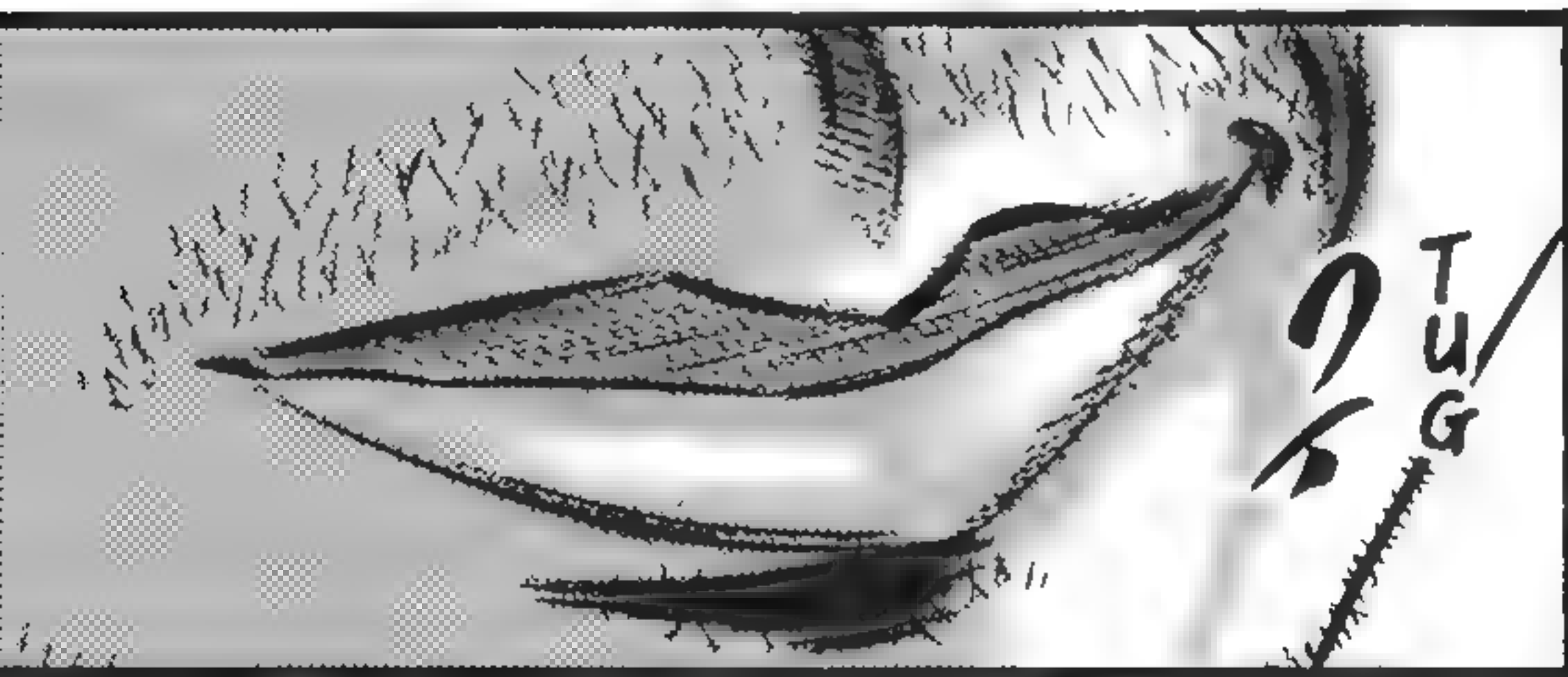
HEY  
THERE,  
CAR GUY!

OH!



HAVEN'T  
SEEN YA  
LATELY.

WHATCHA  
BEEN UP  
TO?



TUG



HEY,  
KEN-SAN.

'SUP?



KEH KEH KEH KEH KEH!



OH, YOU  
KNOW.  
VISITING  
MY...YOU  
KNOW.





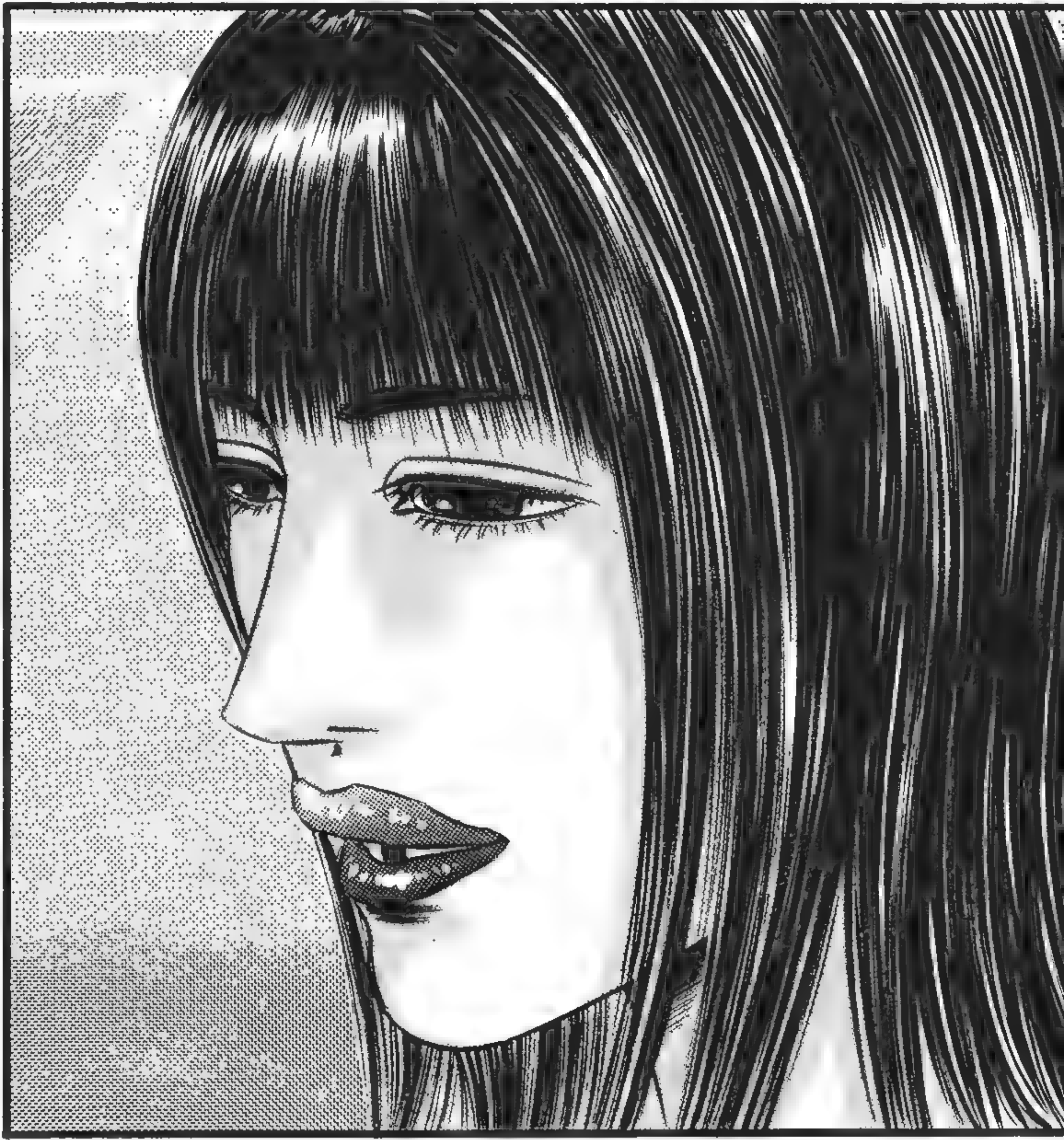
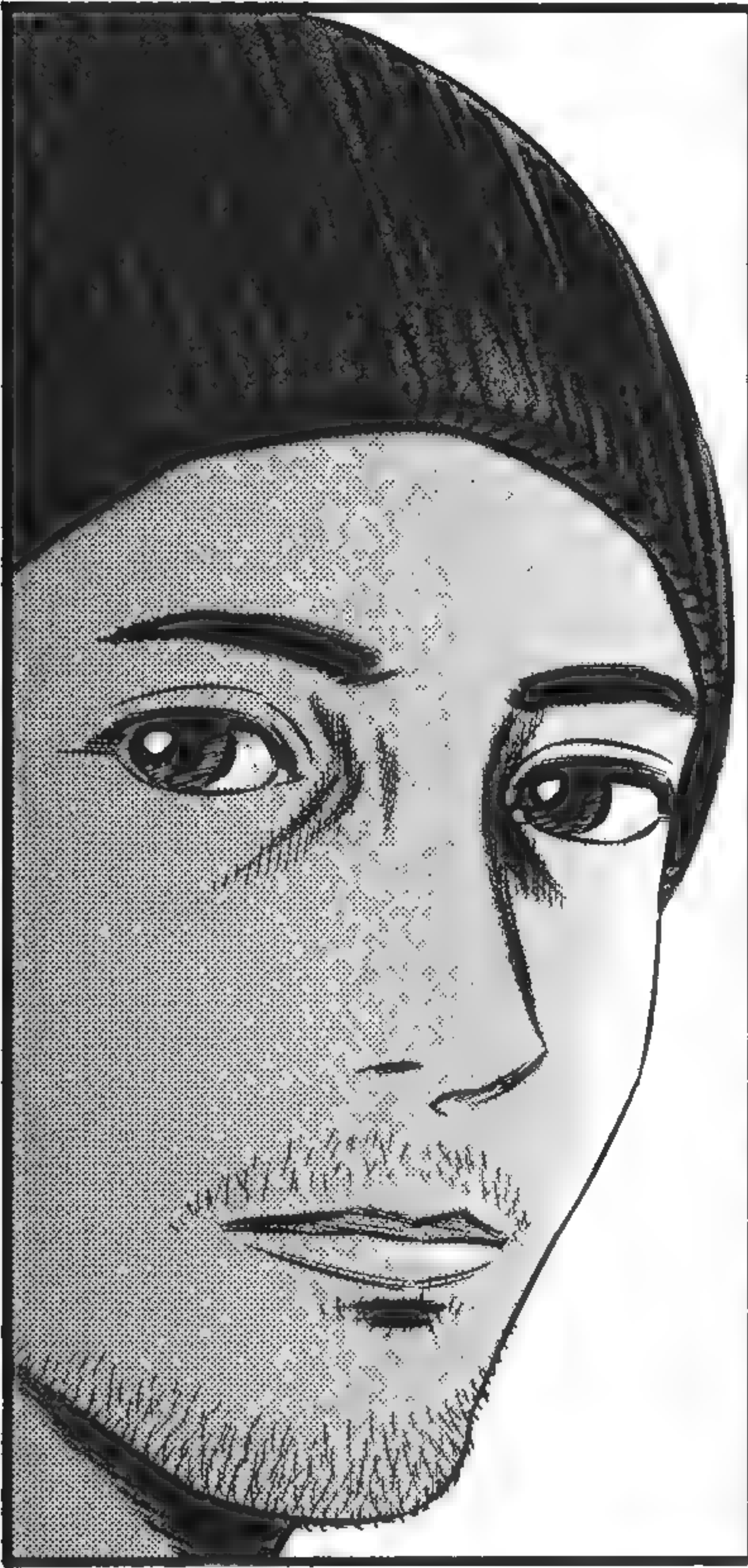
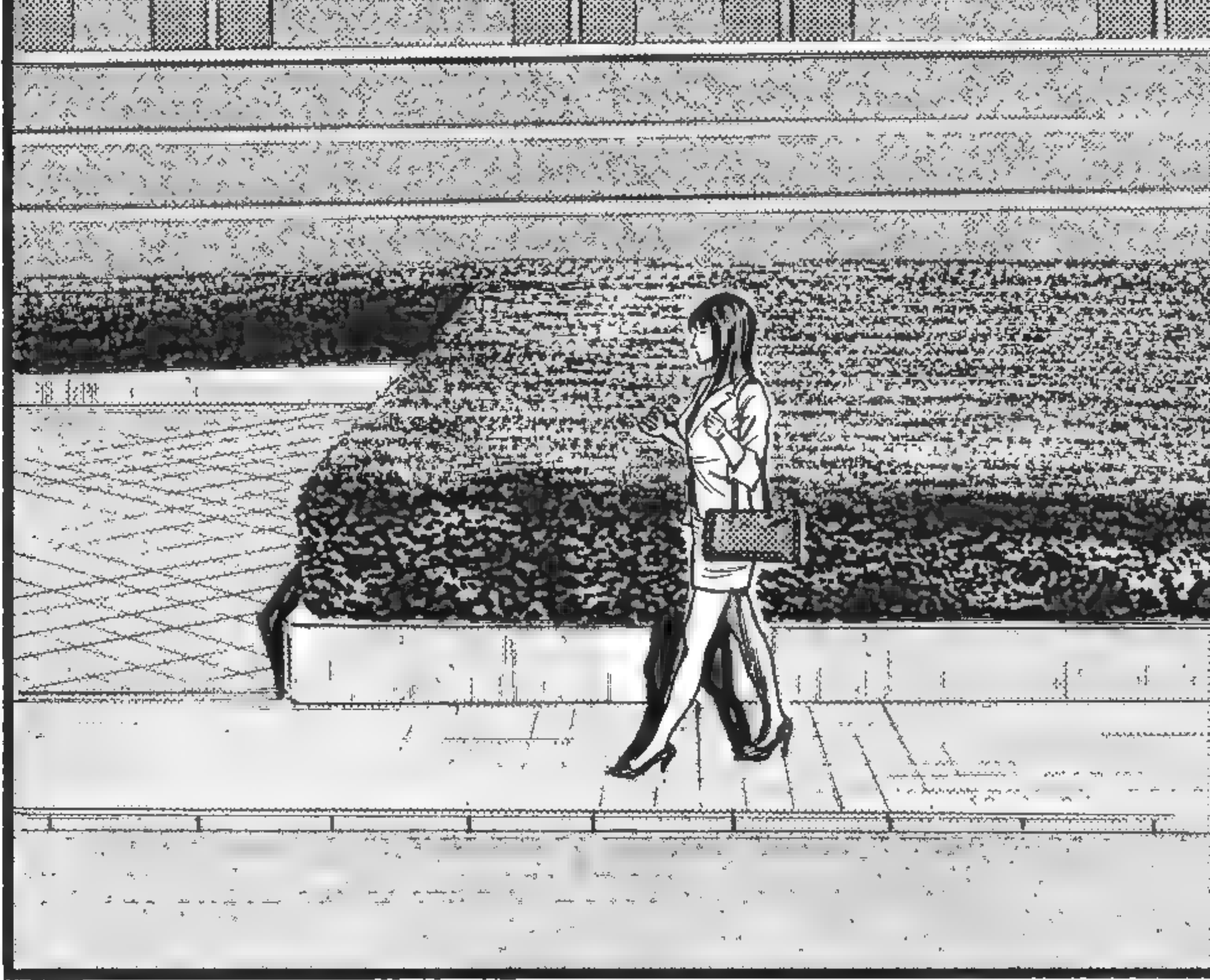
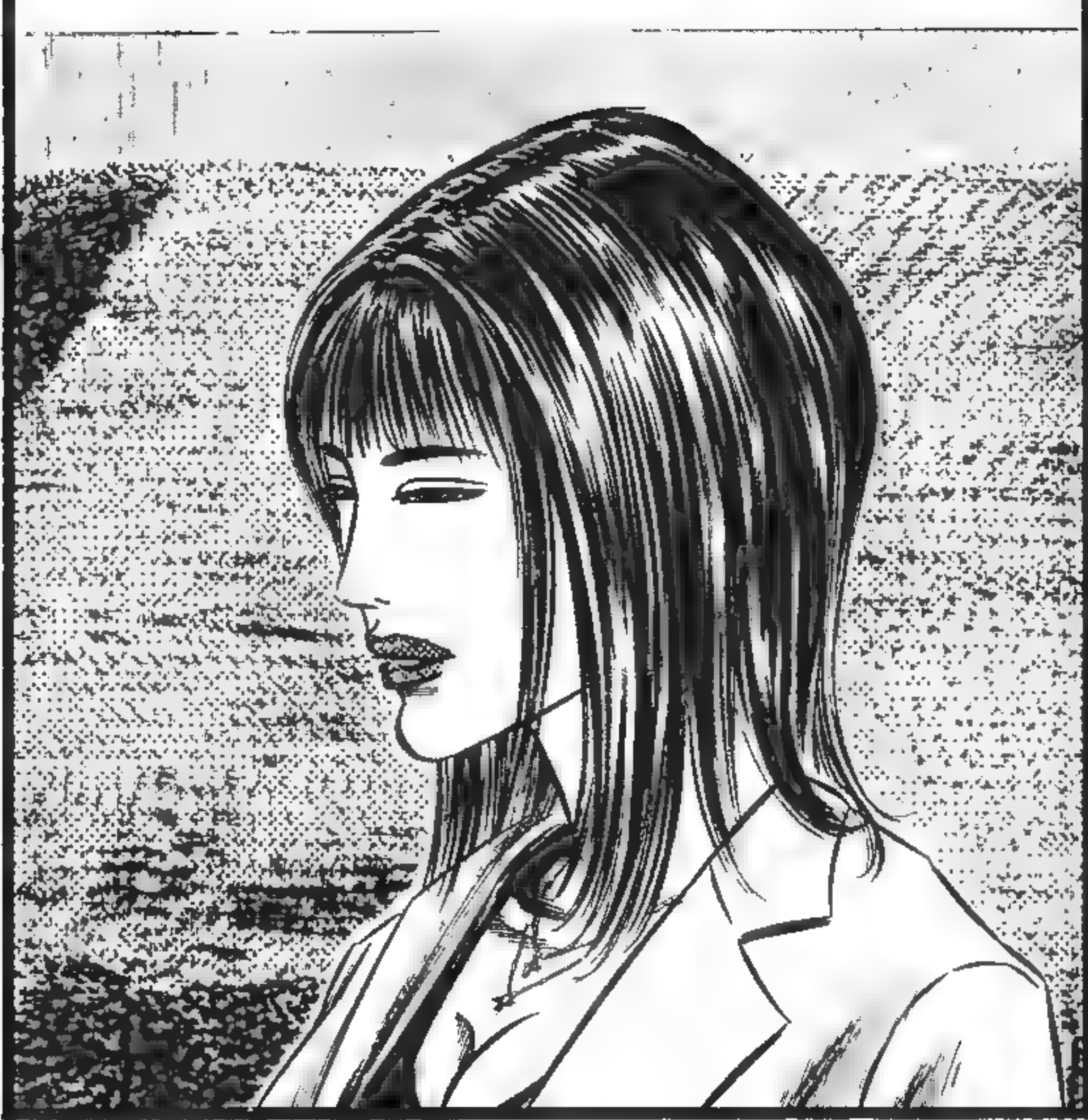




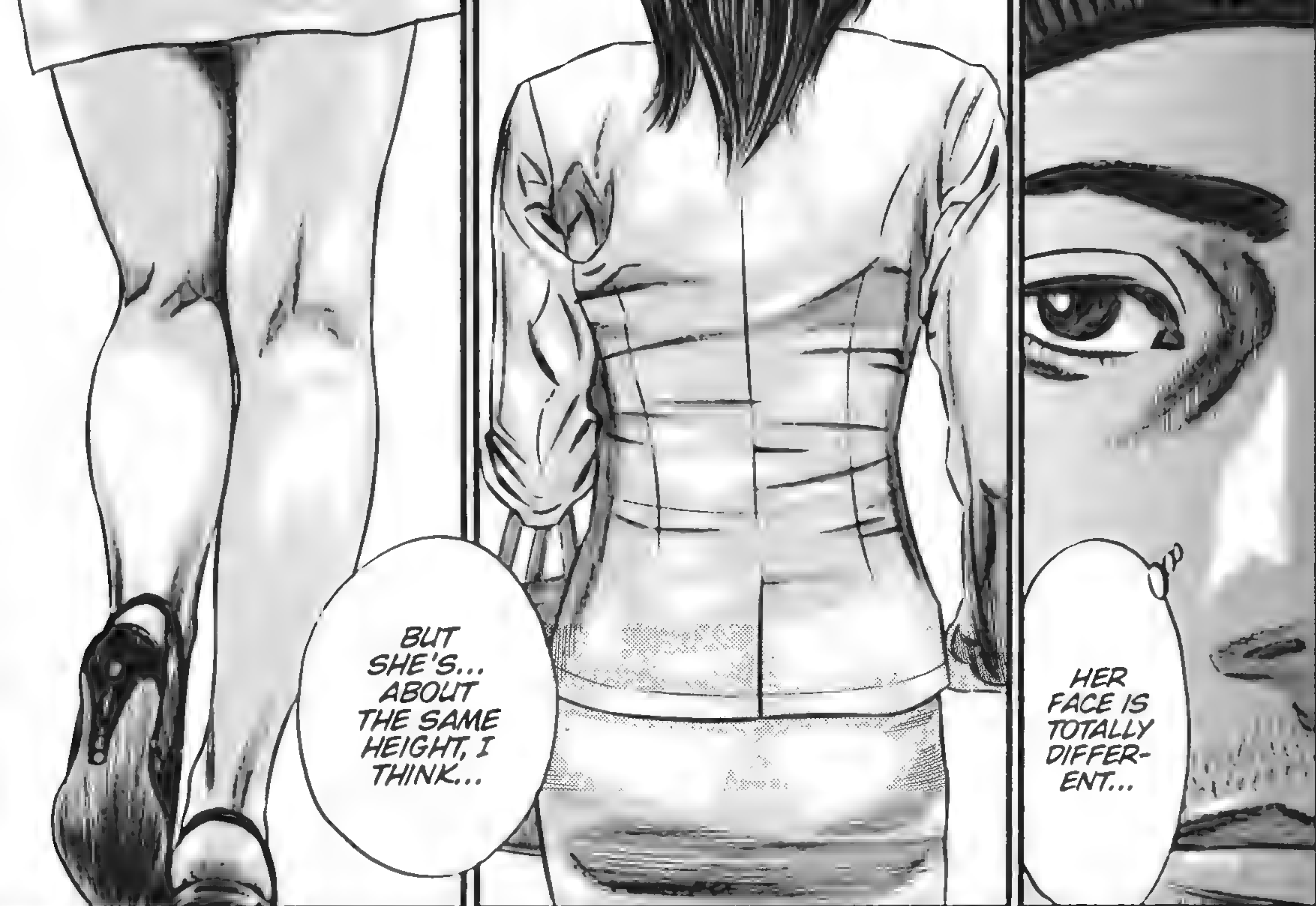
THERE'S  
NO WAY IN  
HELL...

I CAN  
EVER GO  
BACK  
THERE.

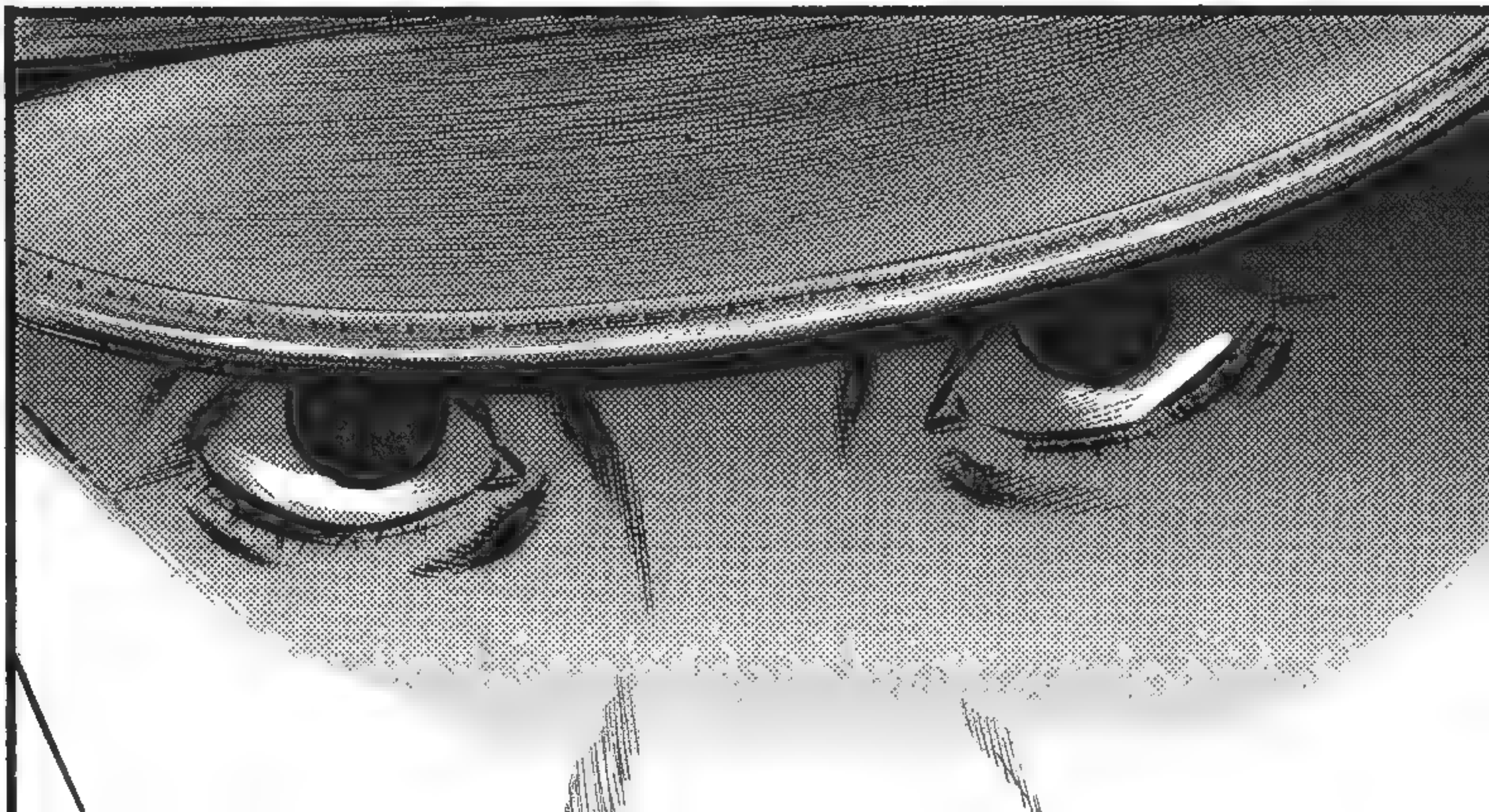
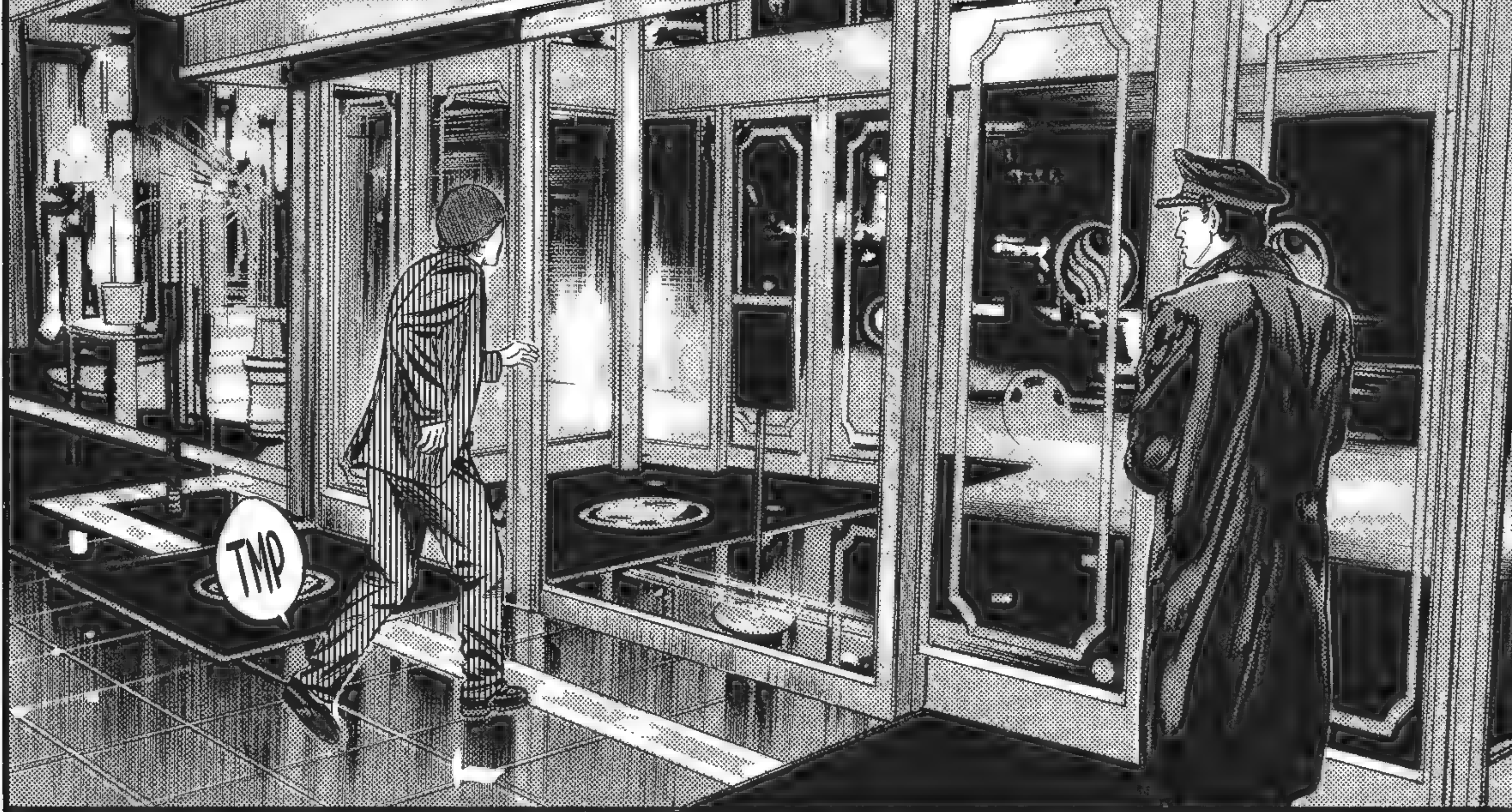












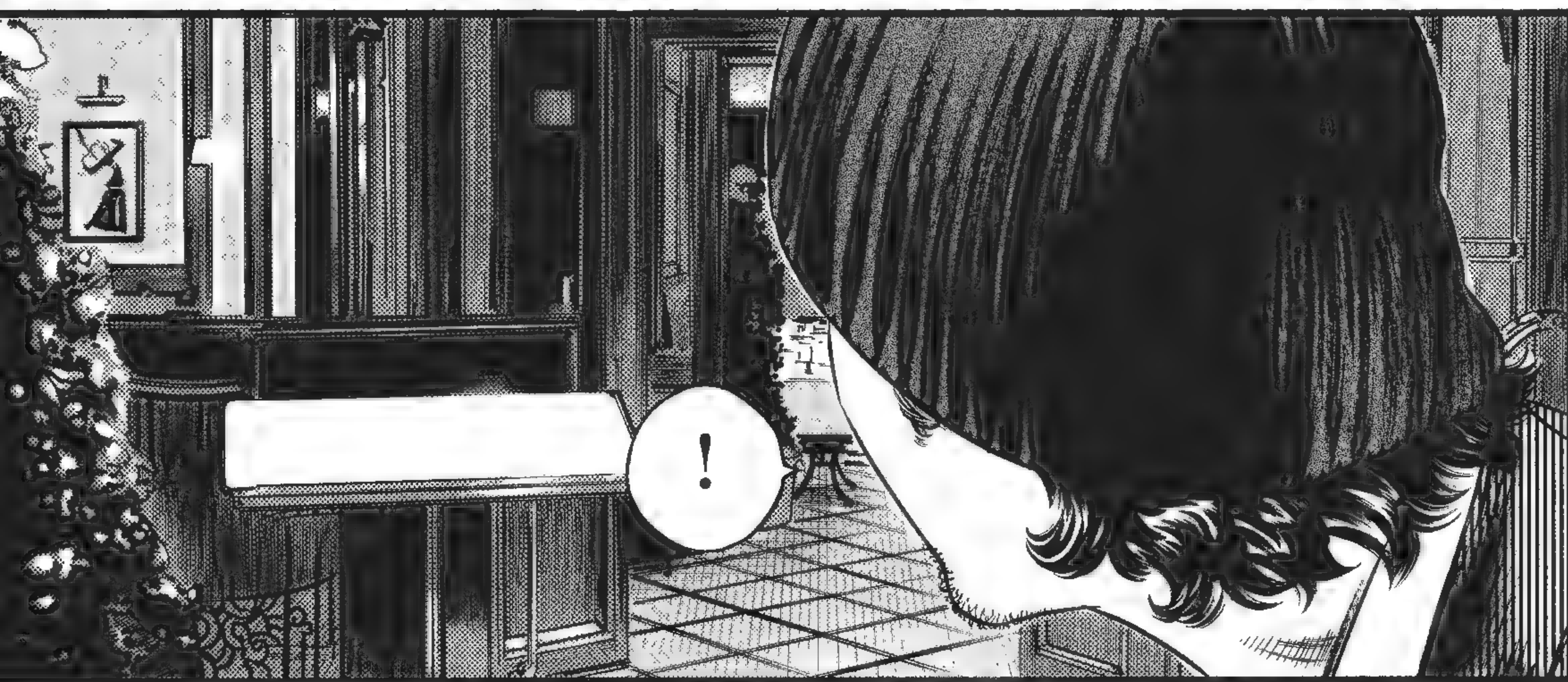




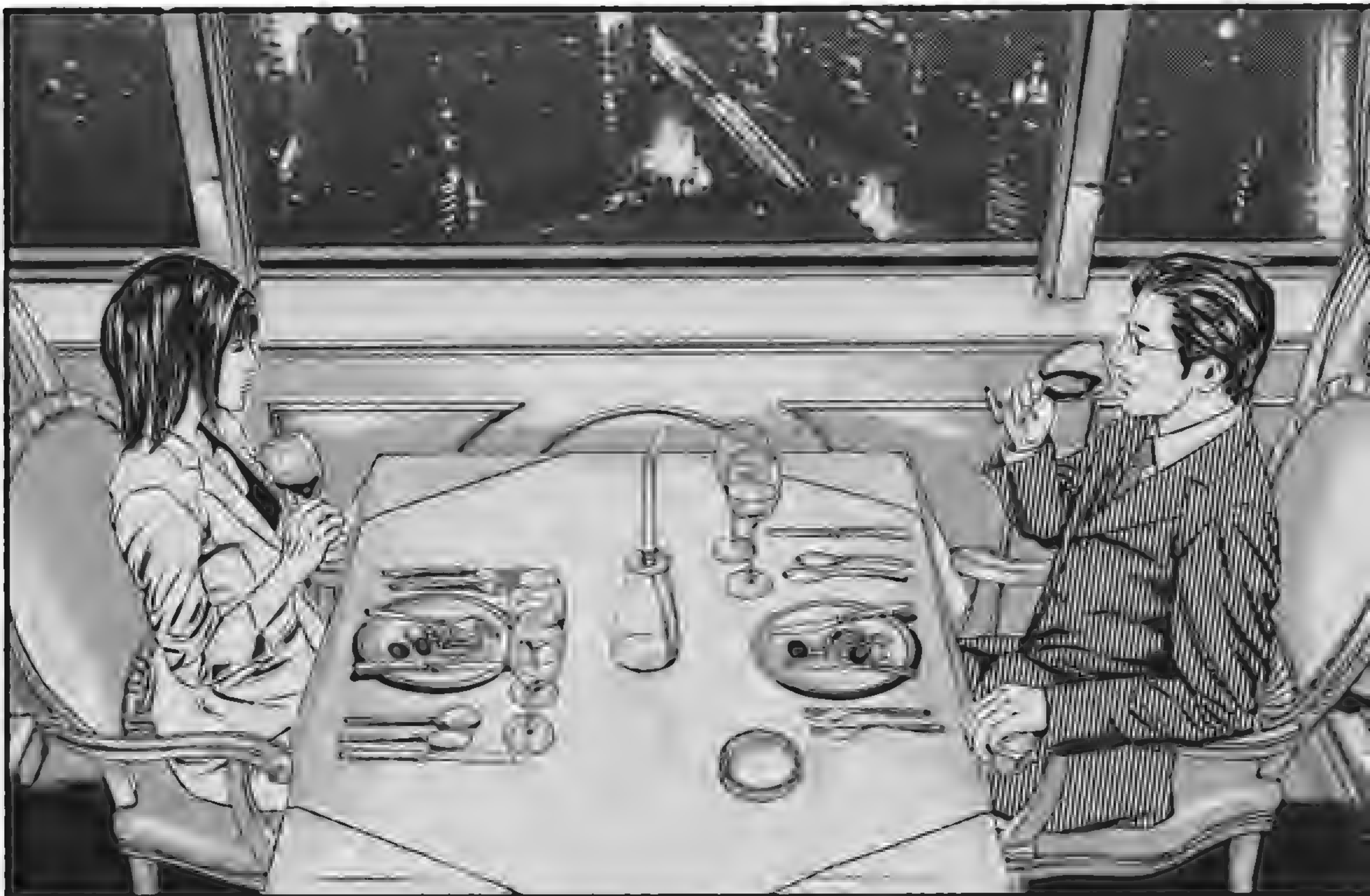




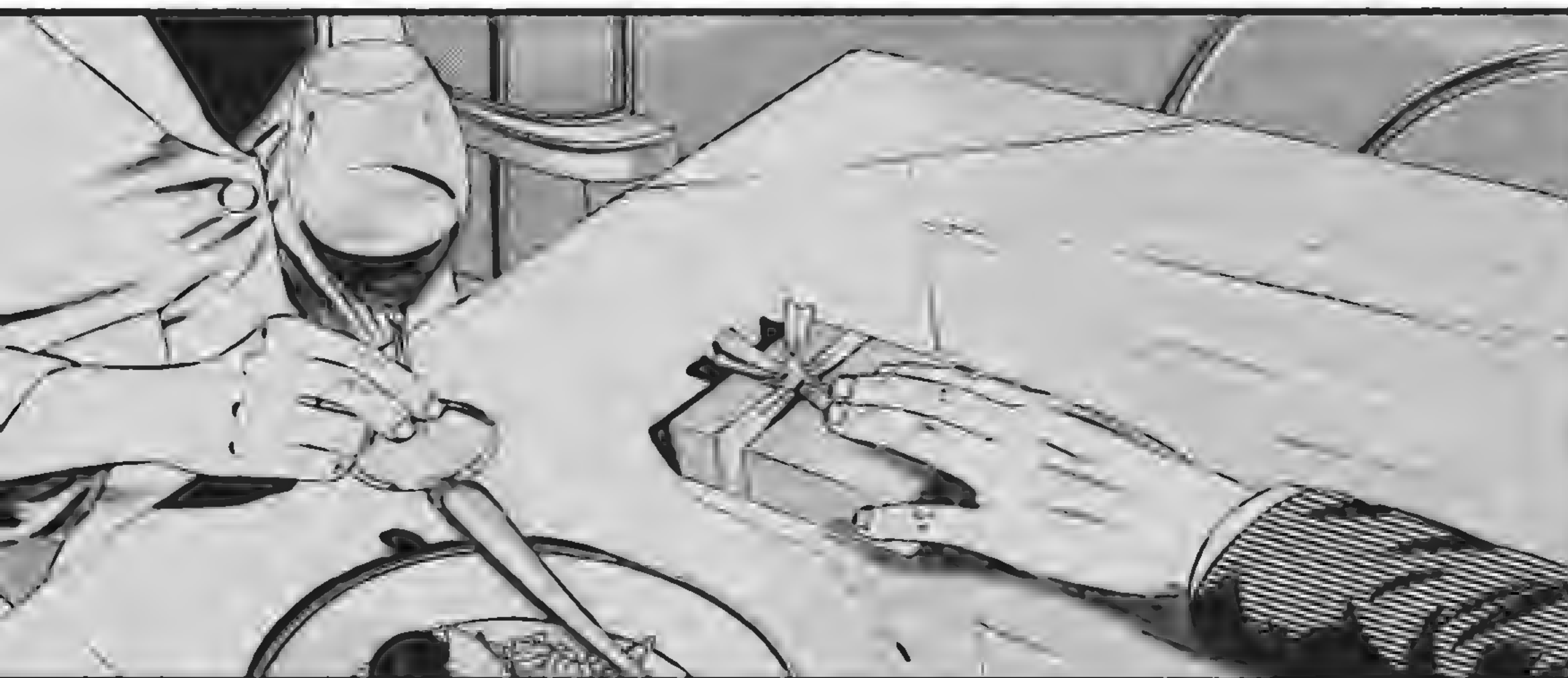
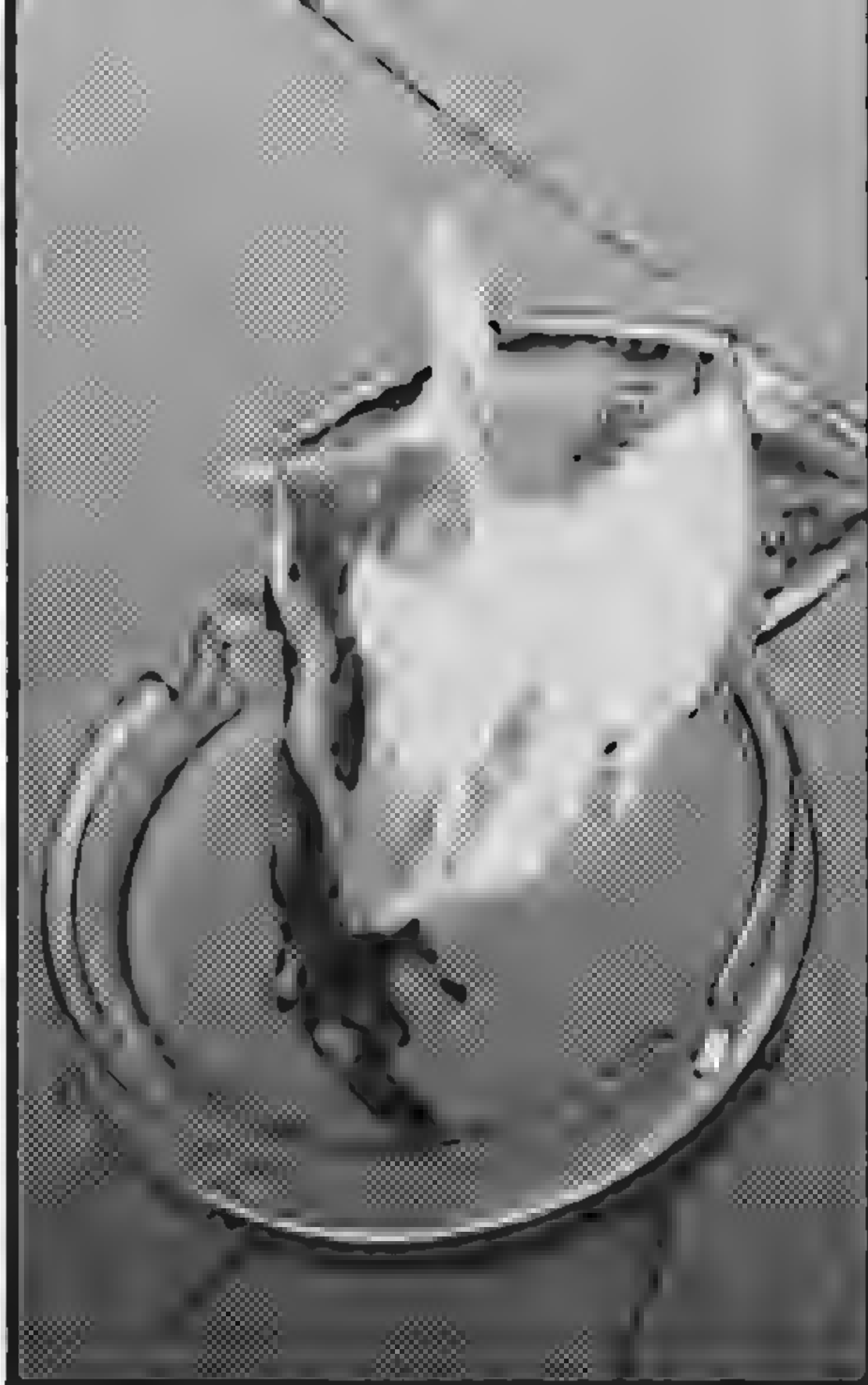




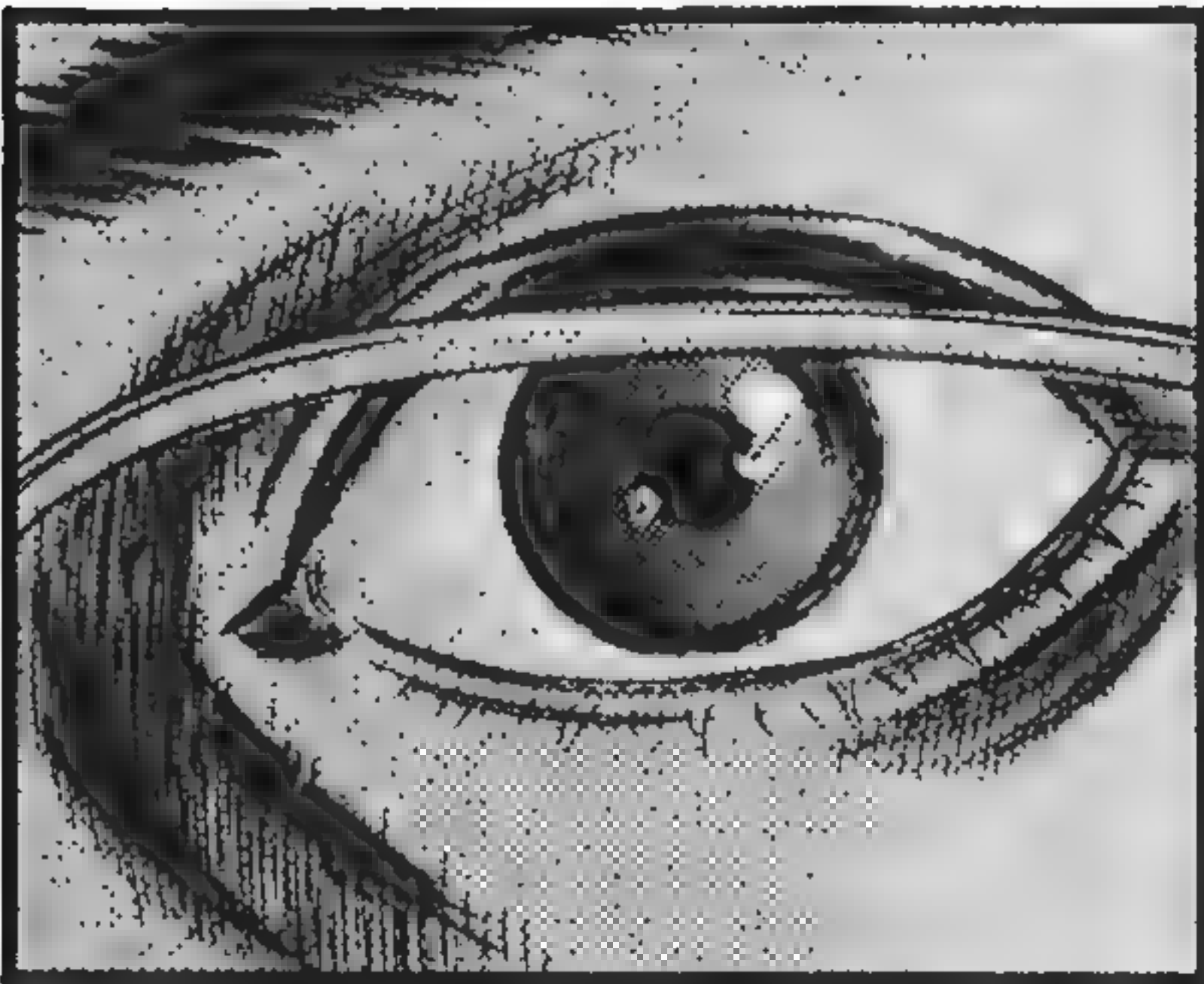
















Is there  
something  
on my  
face?



What's  
the  
matter?



No...  
nothing  
at all.

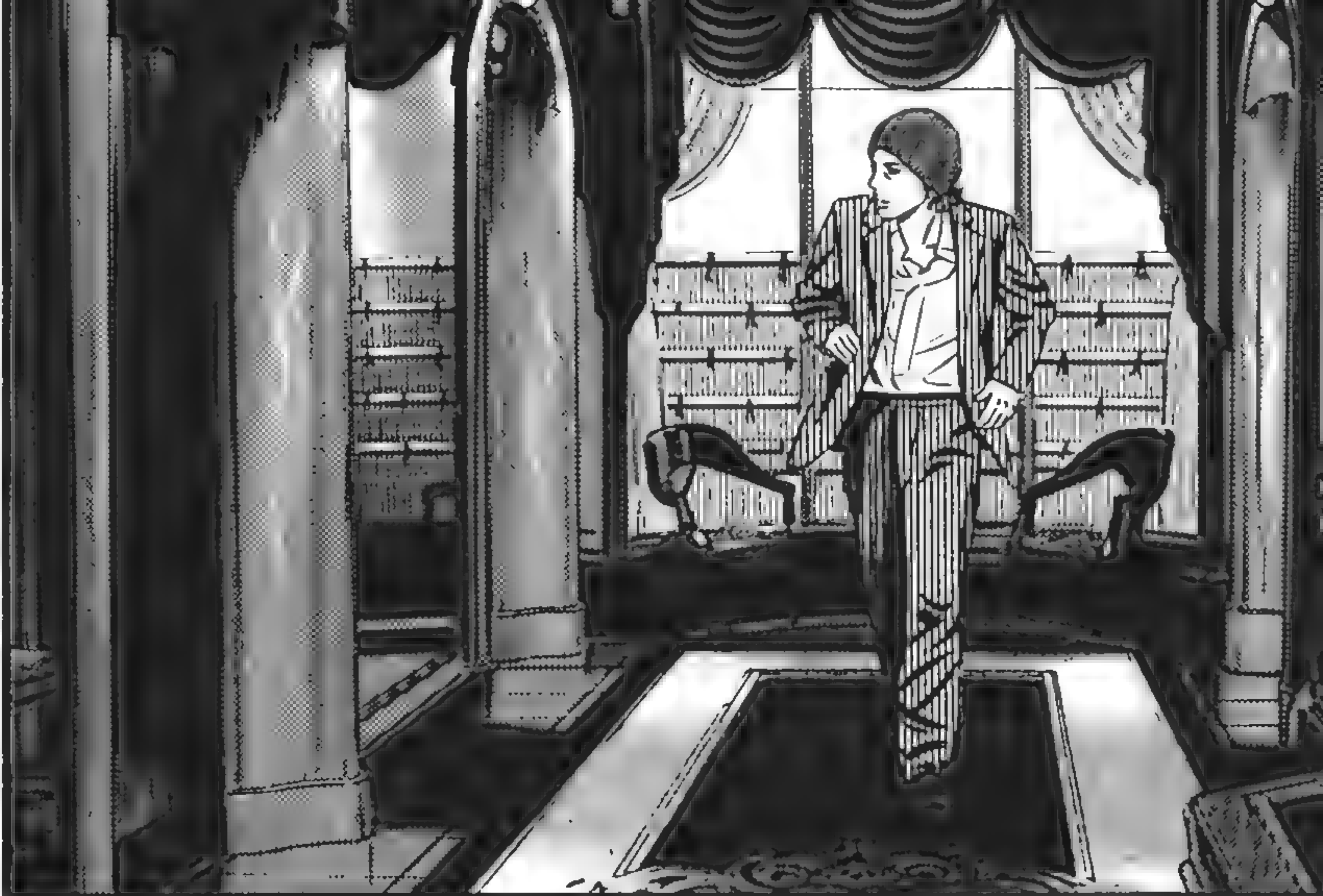


Nothing  
...

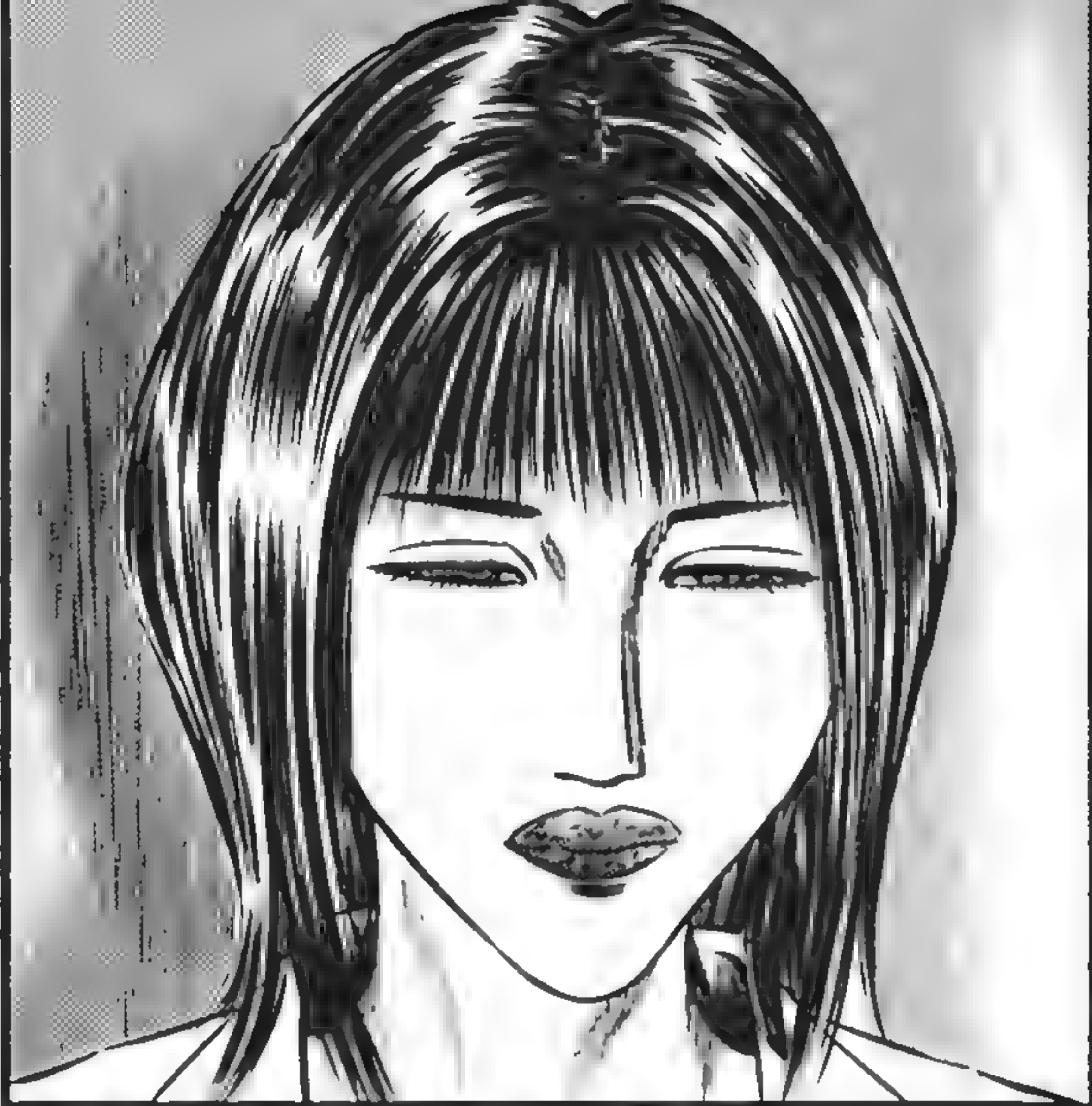


at  
all...

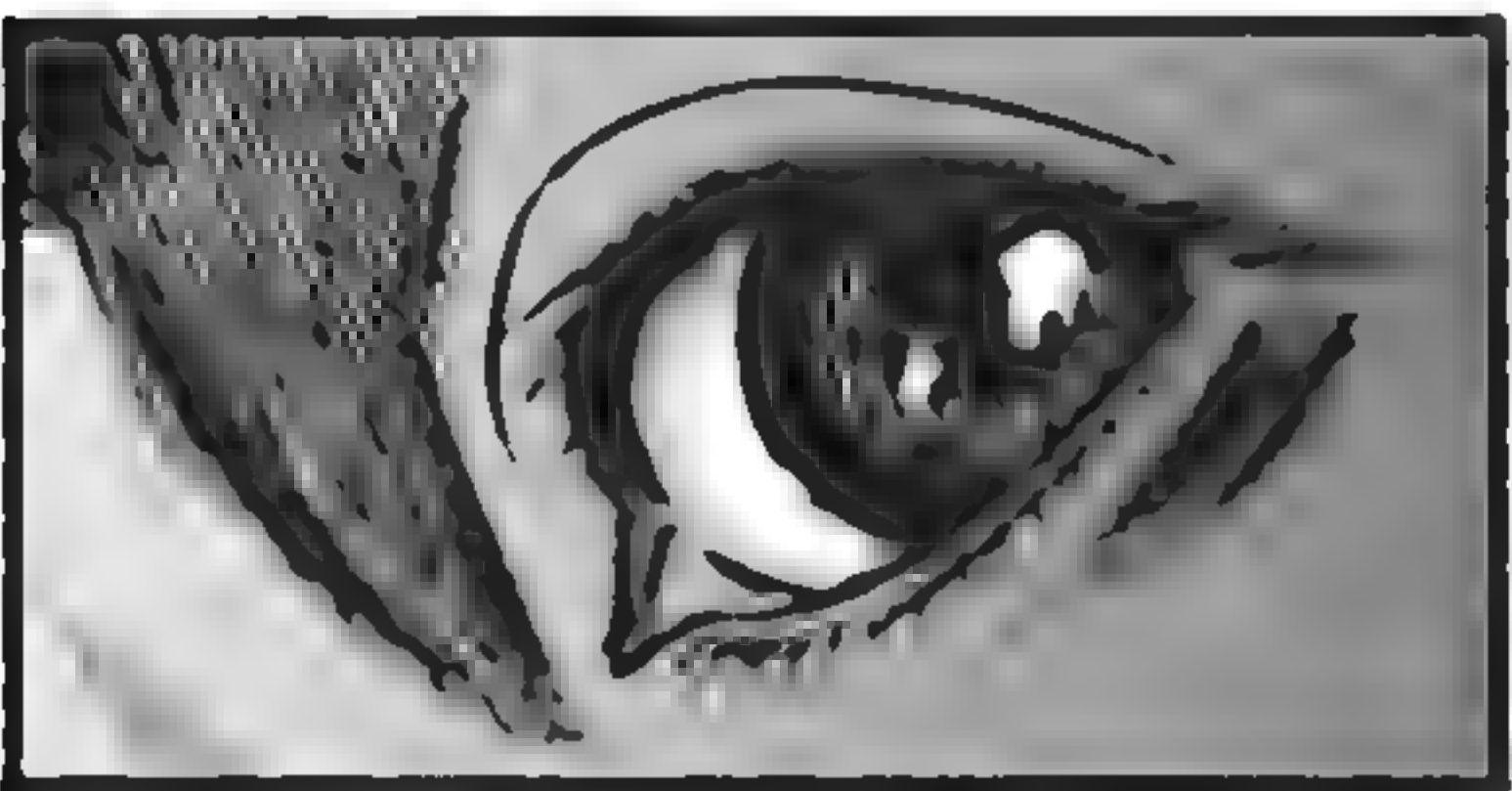




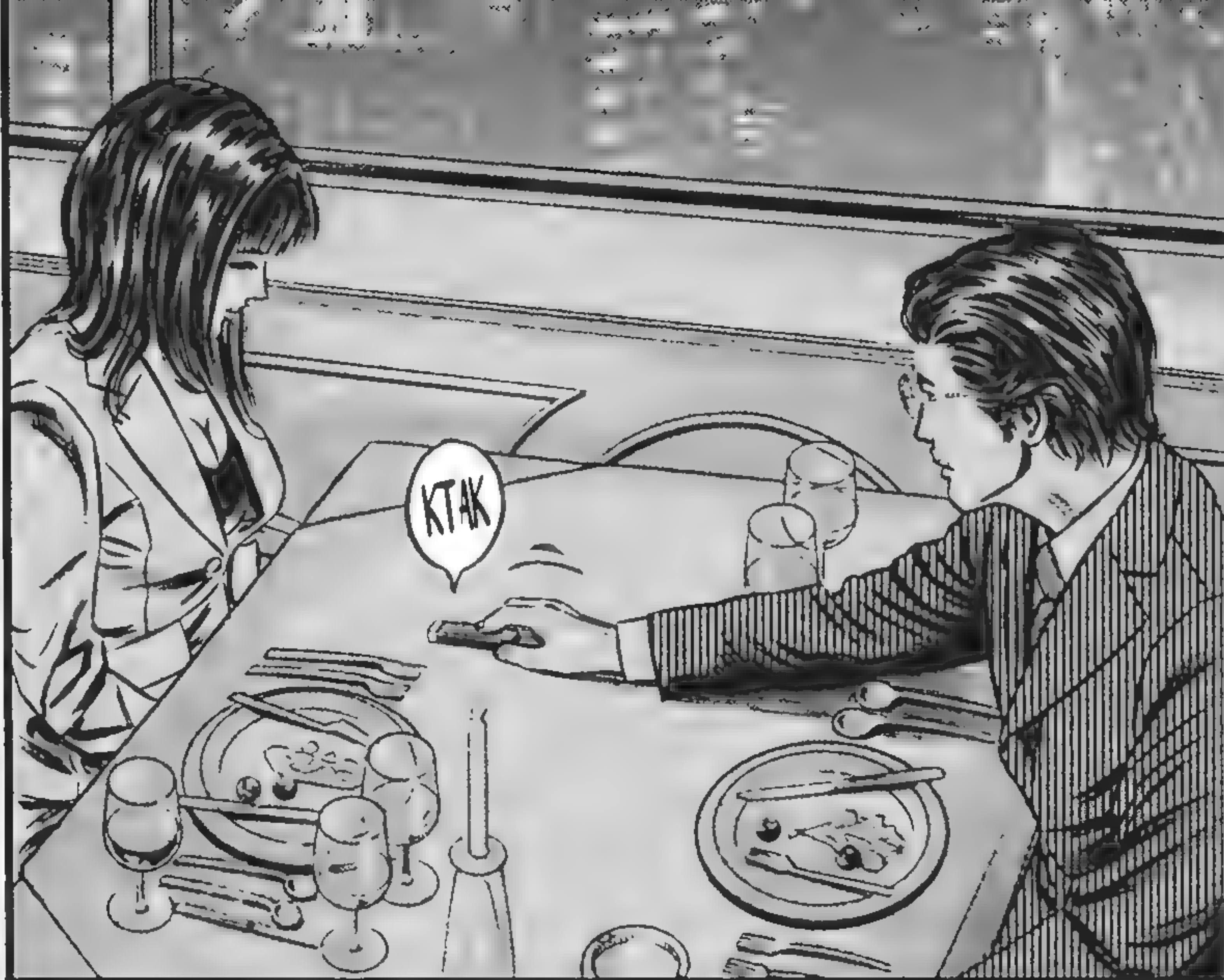




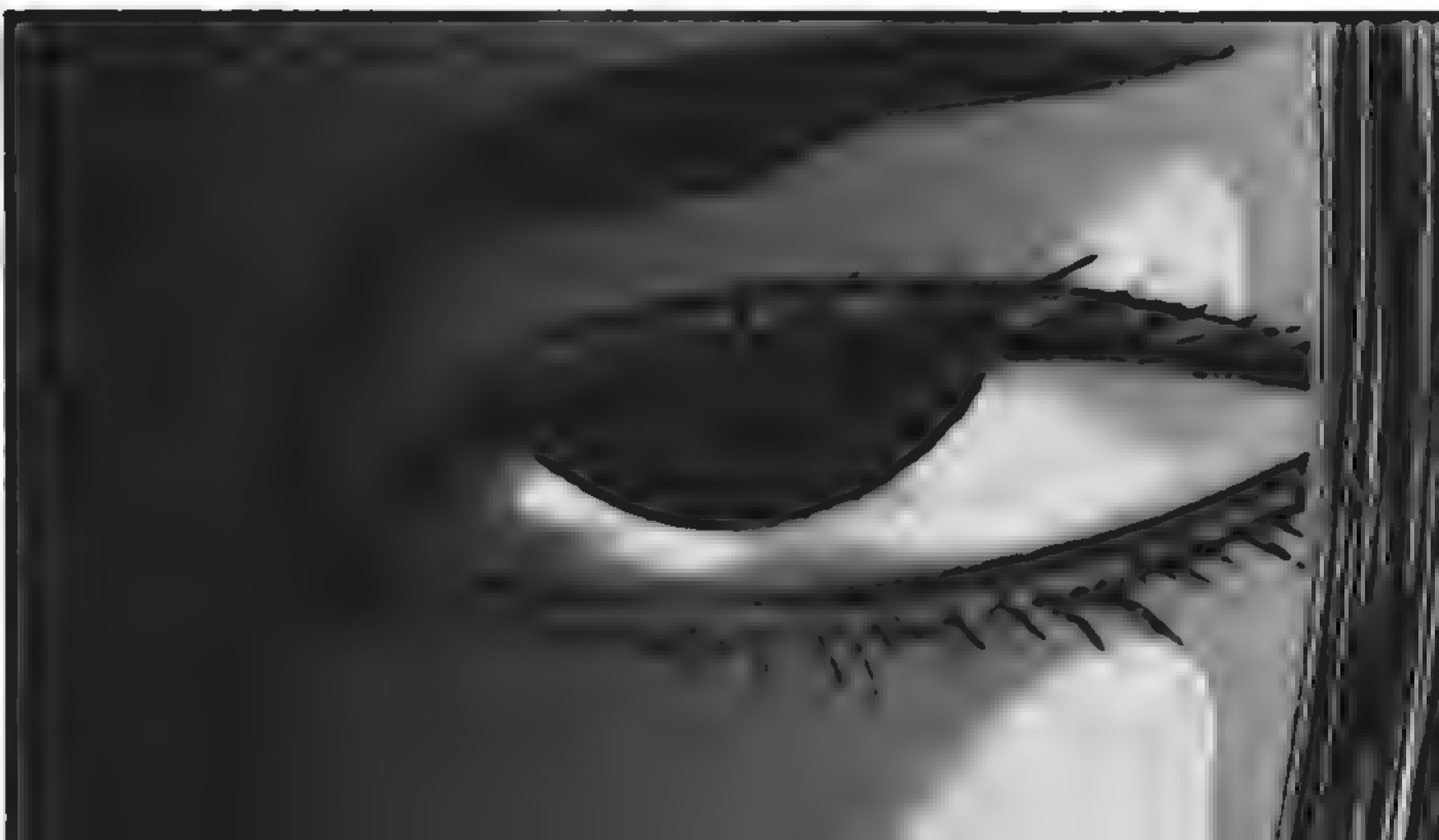
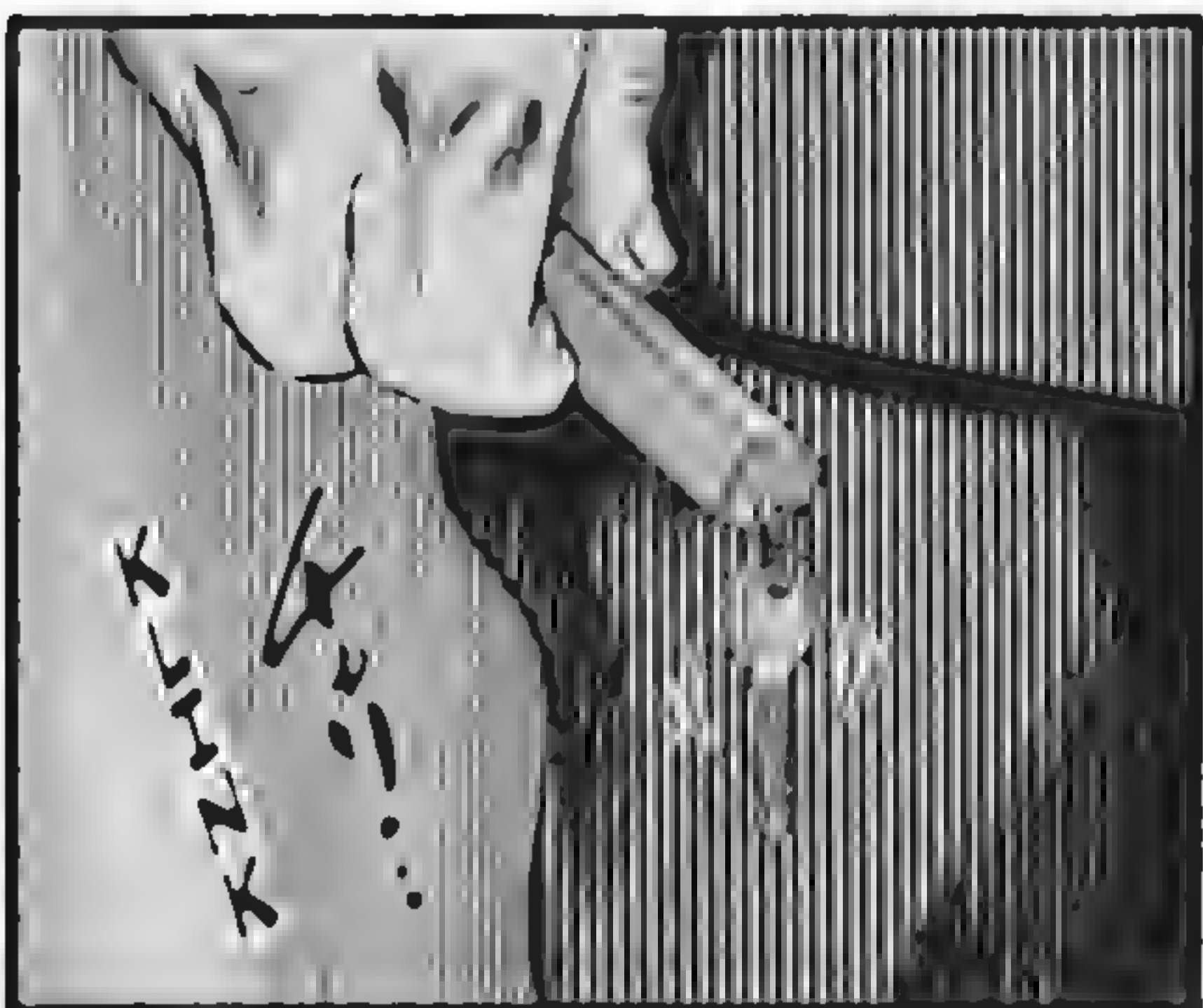
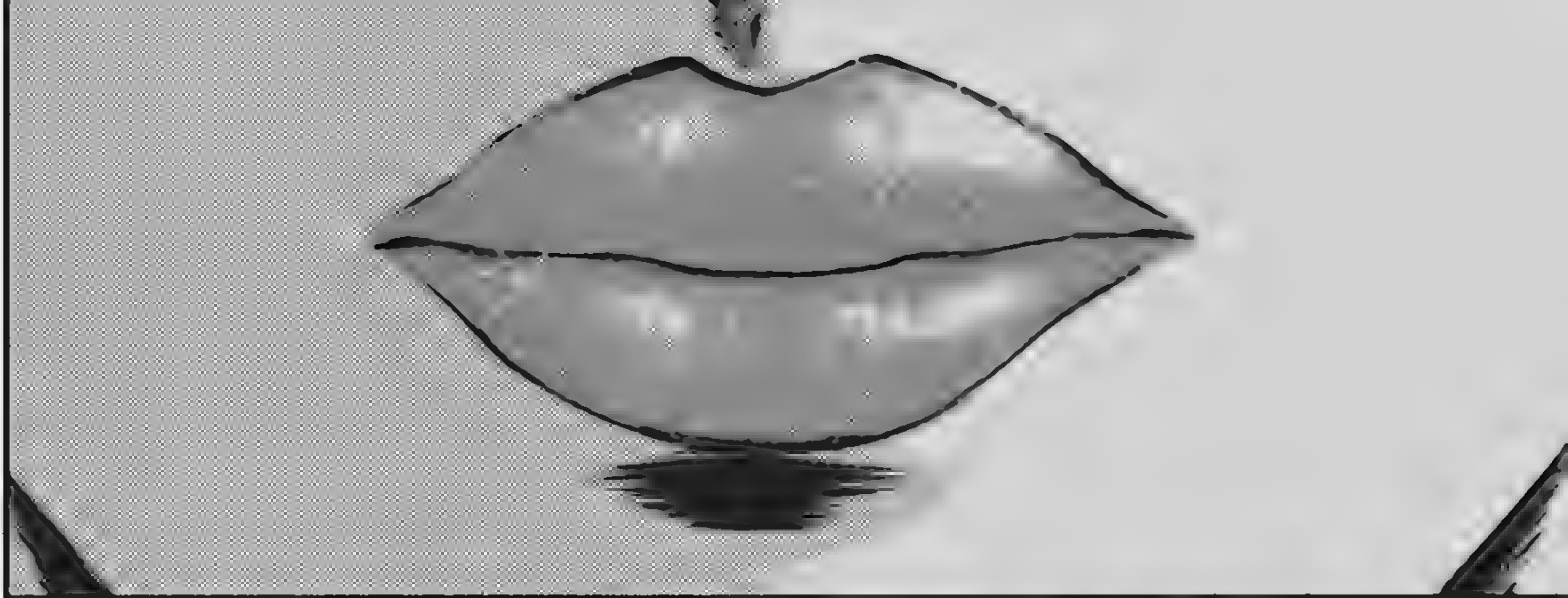




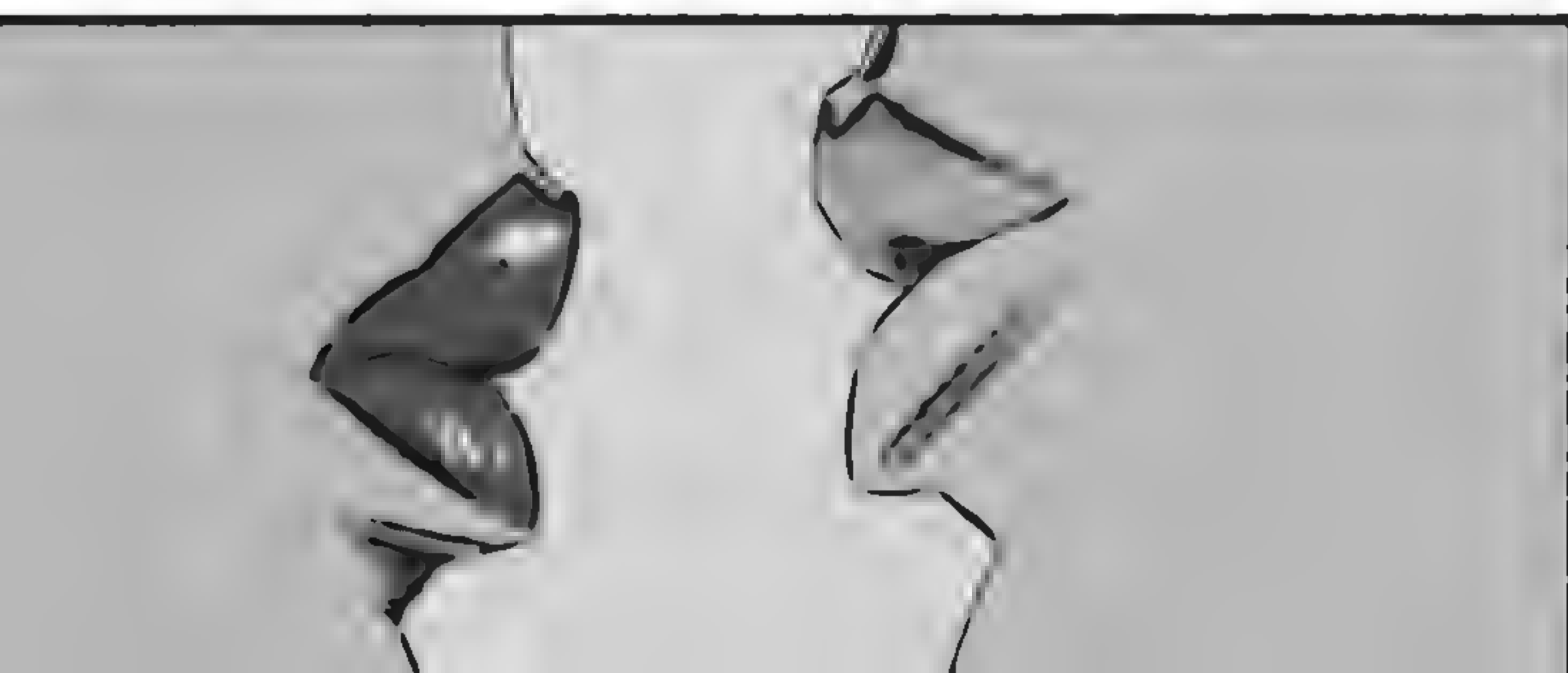
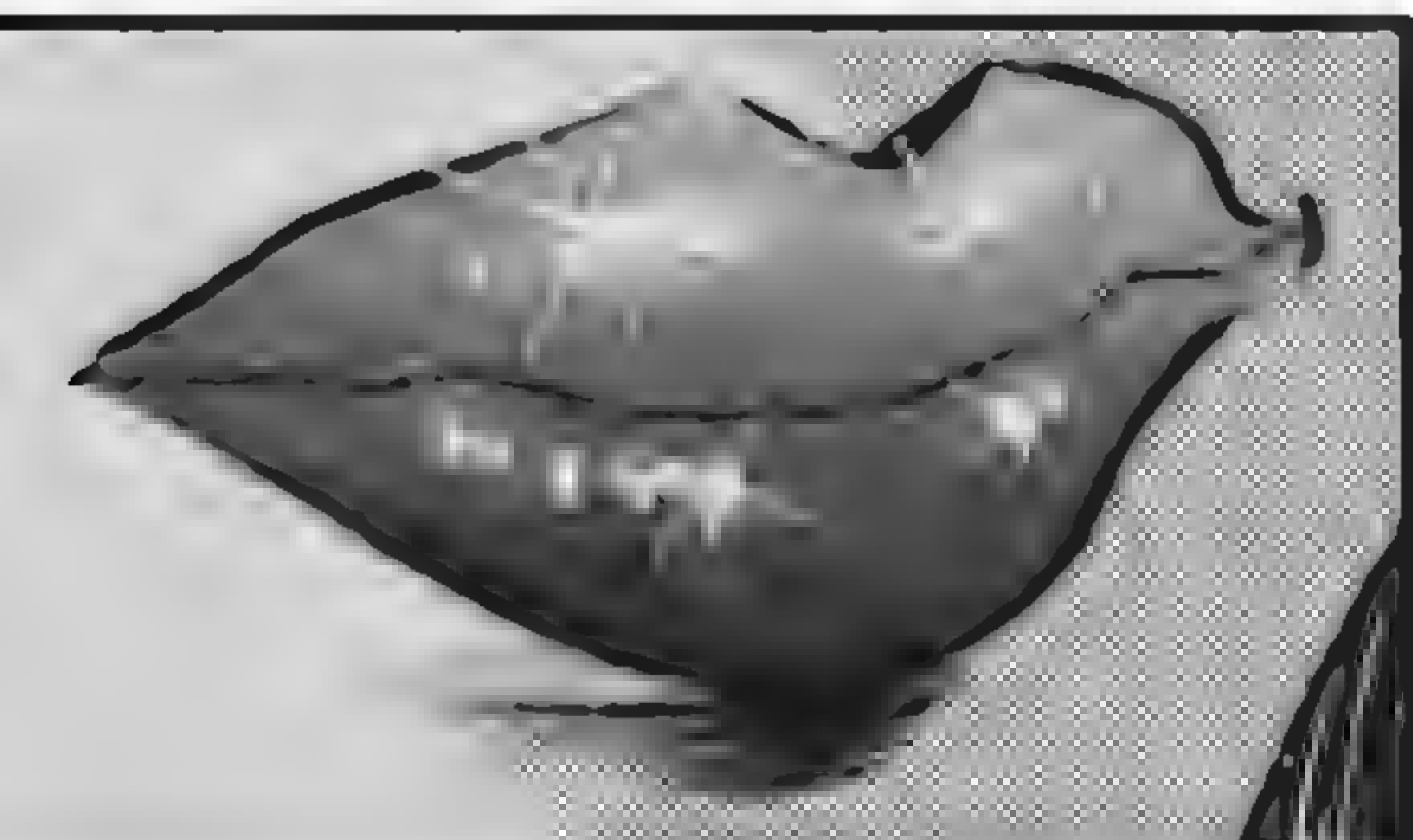












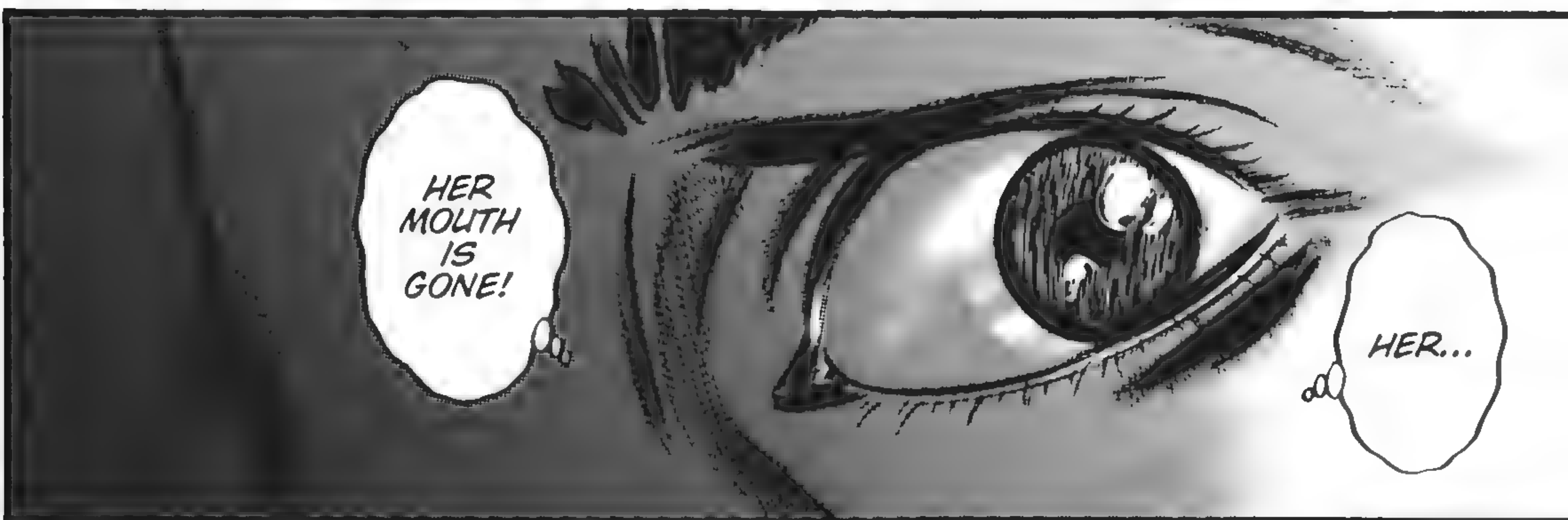




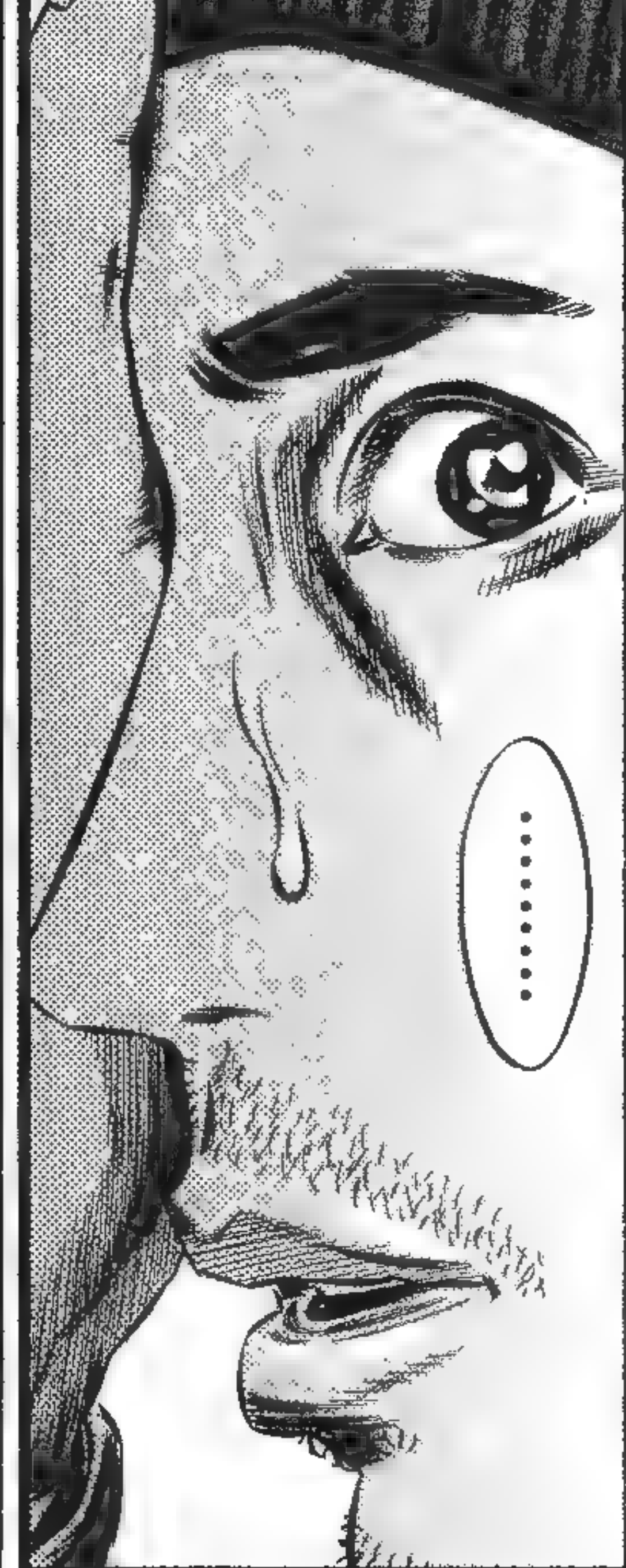




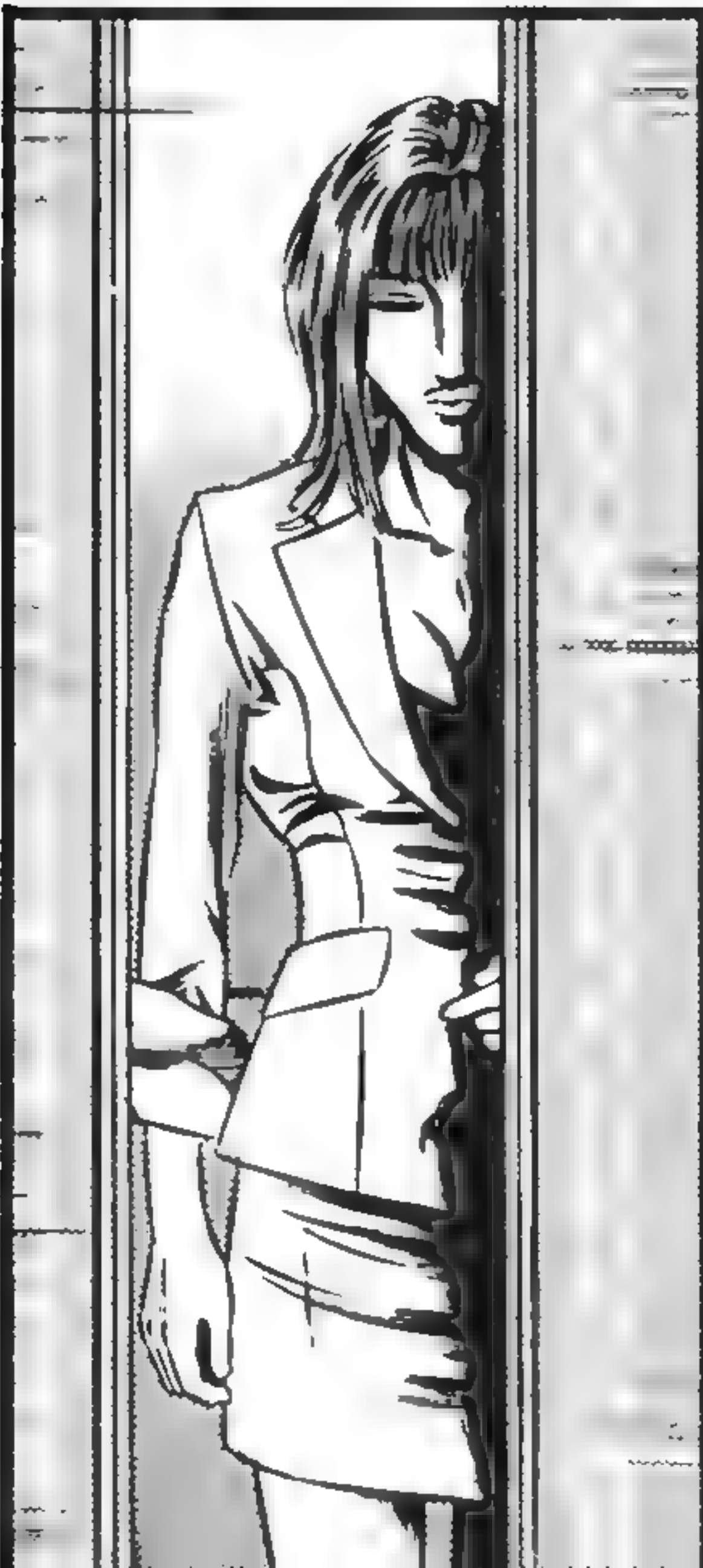
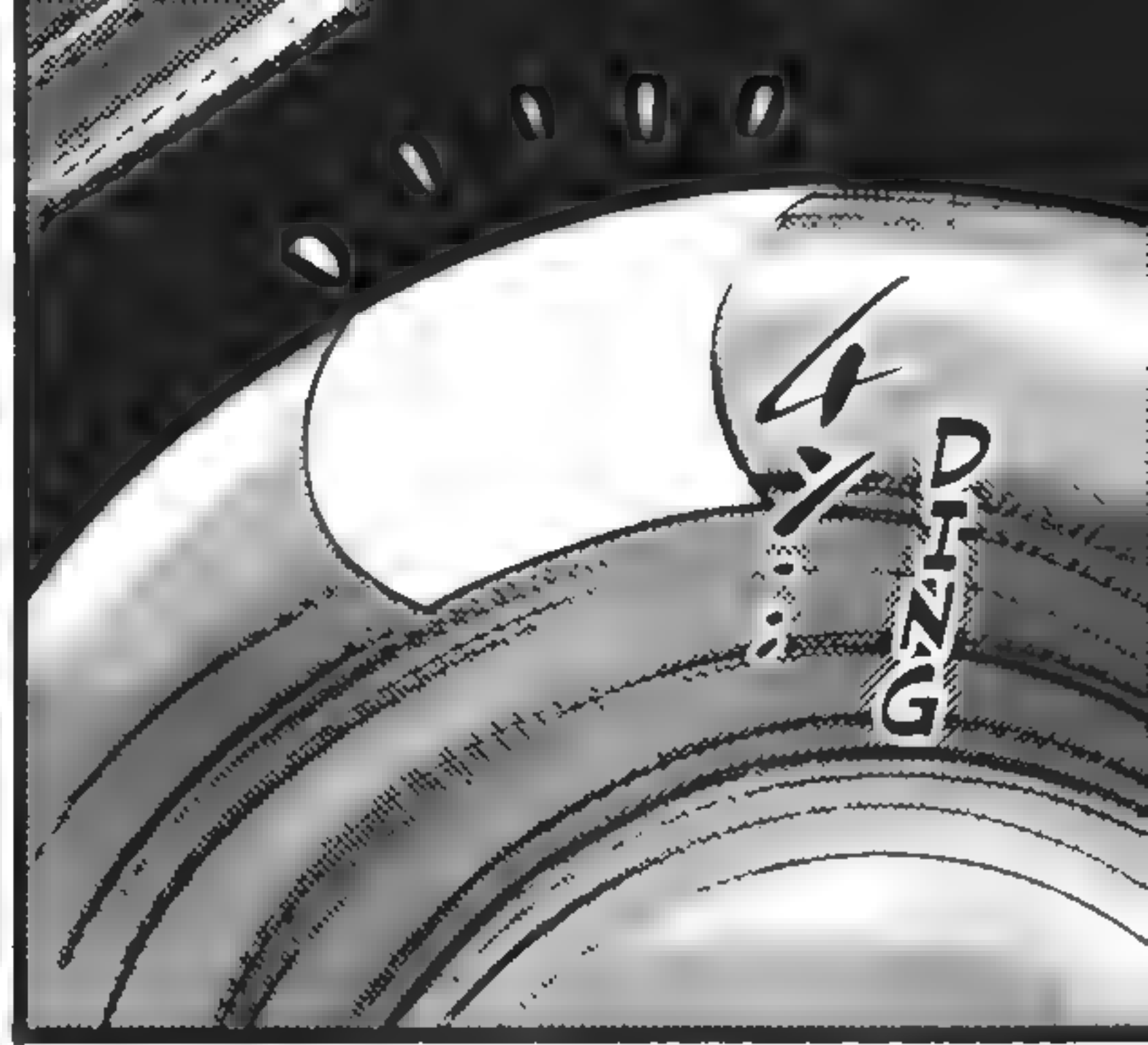




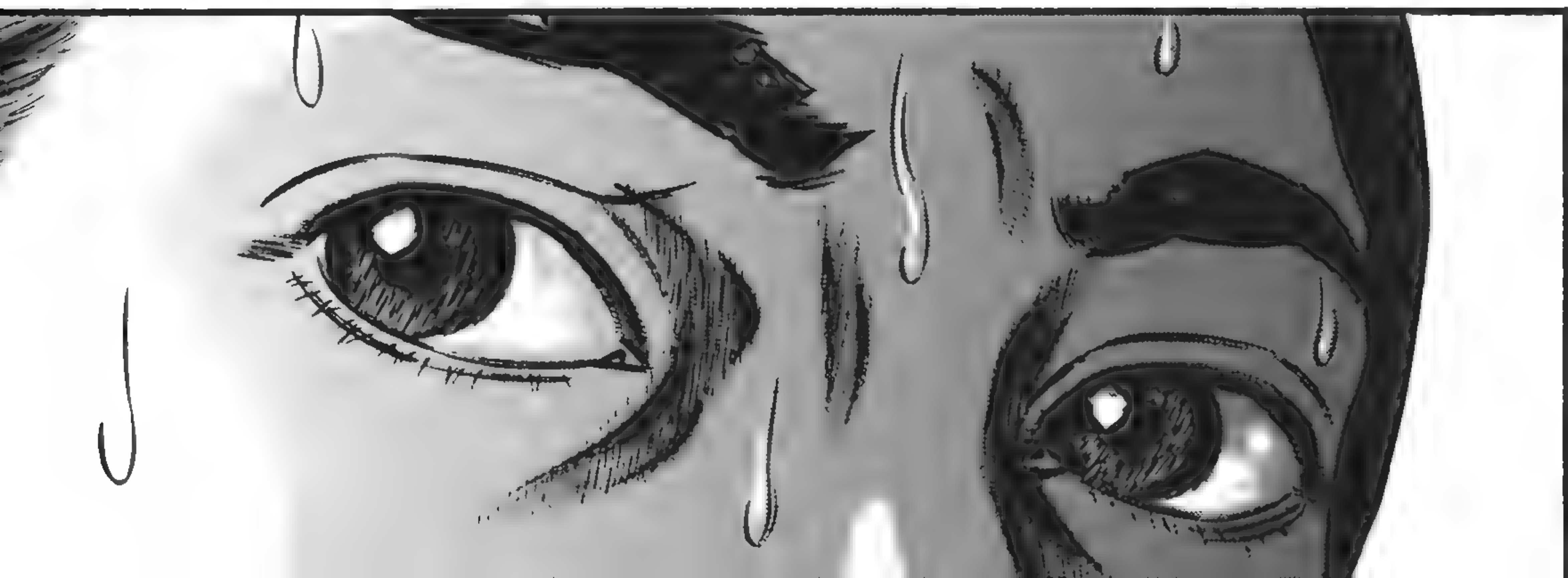




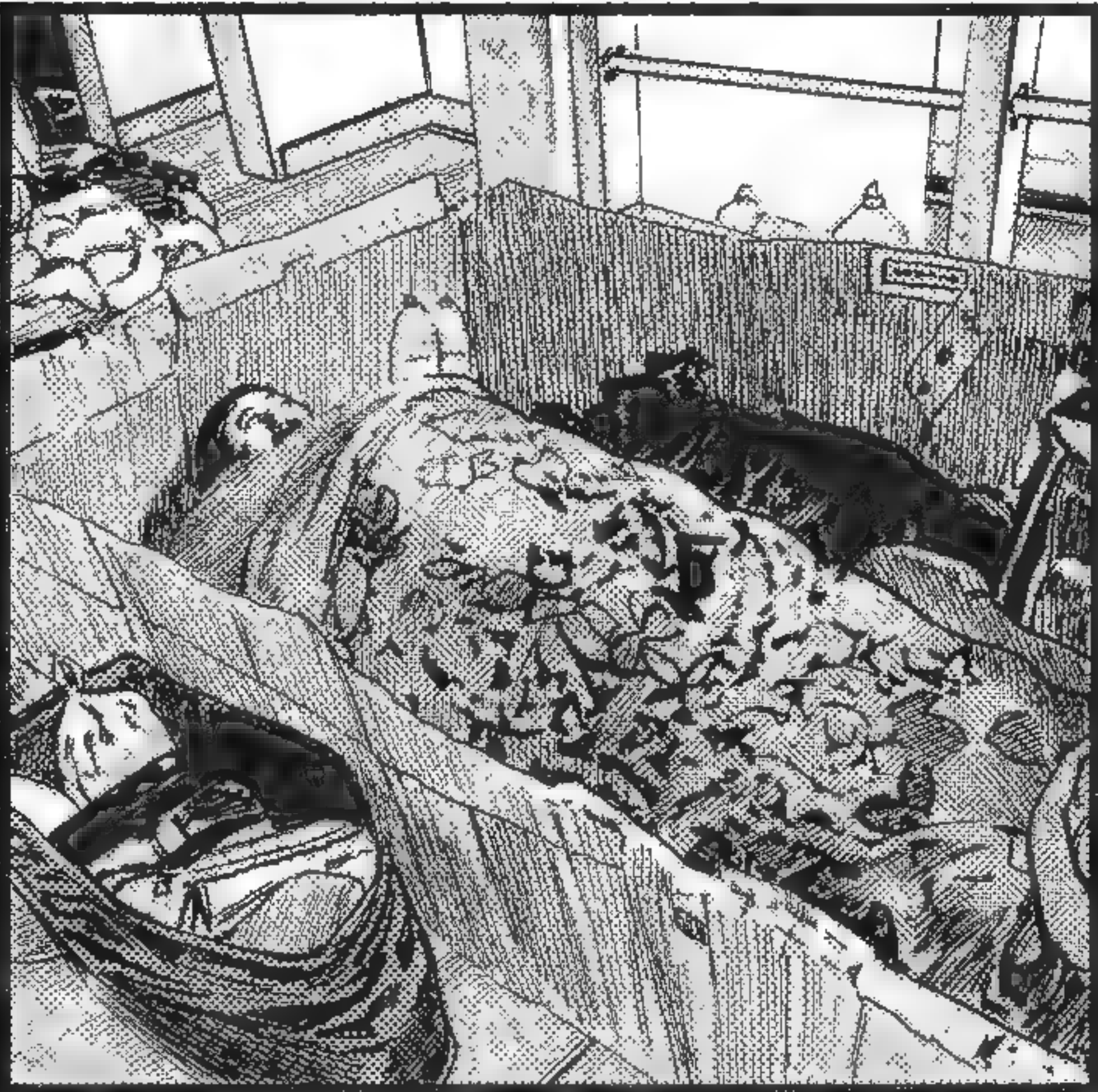
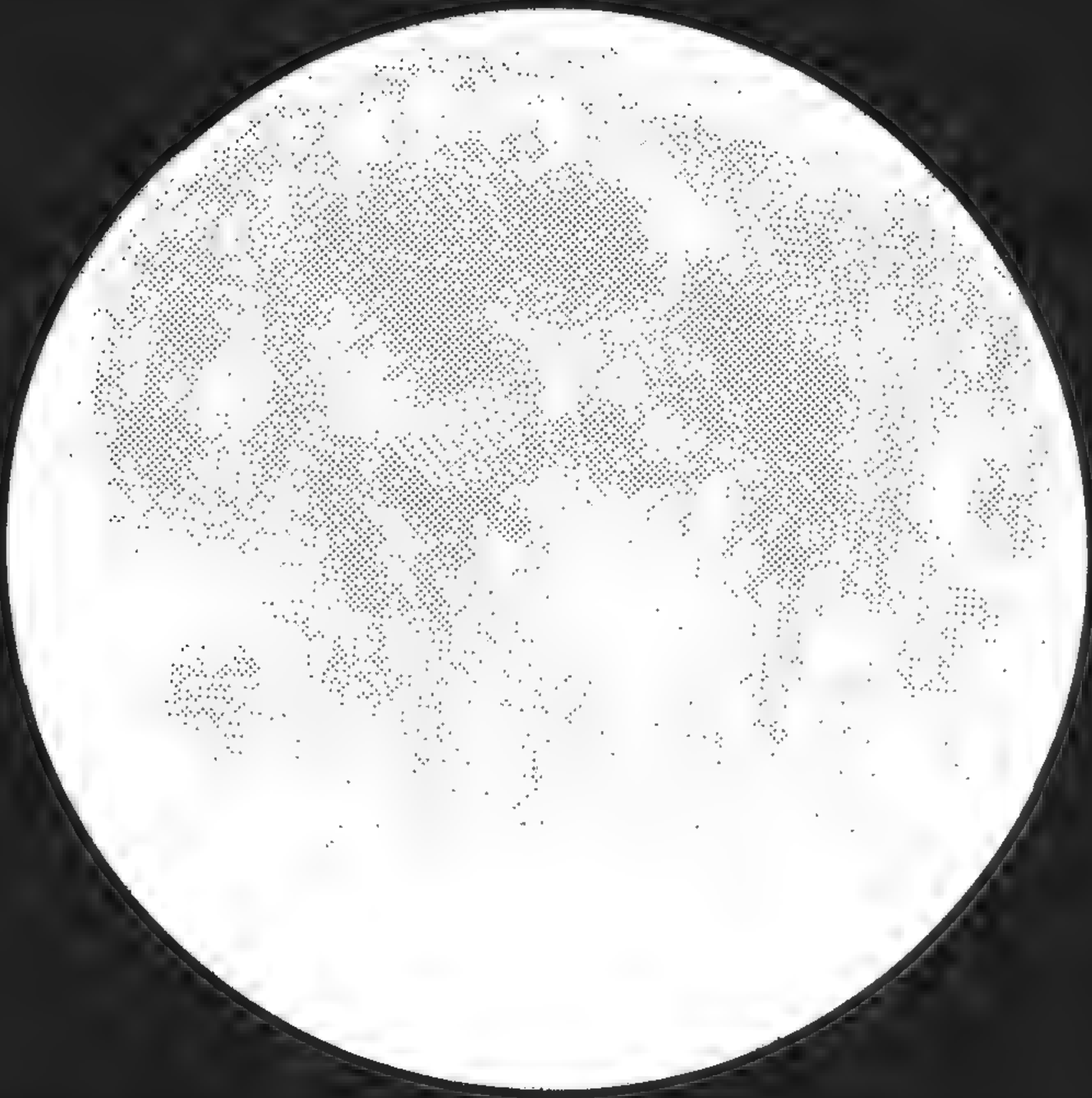




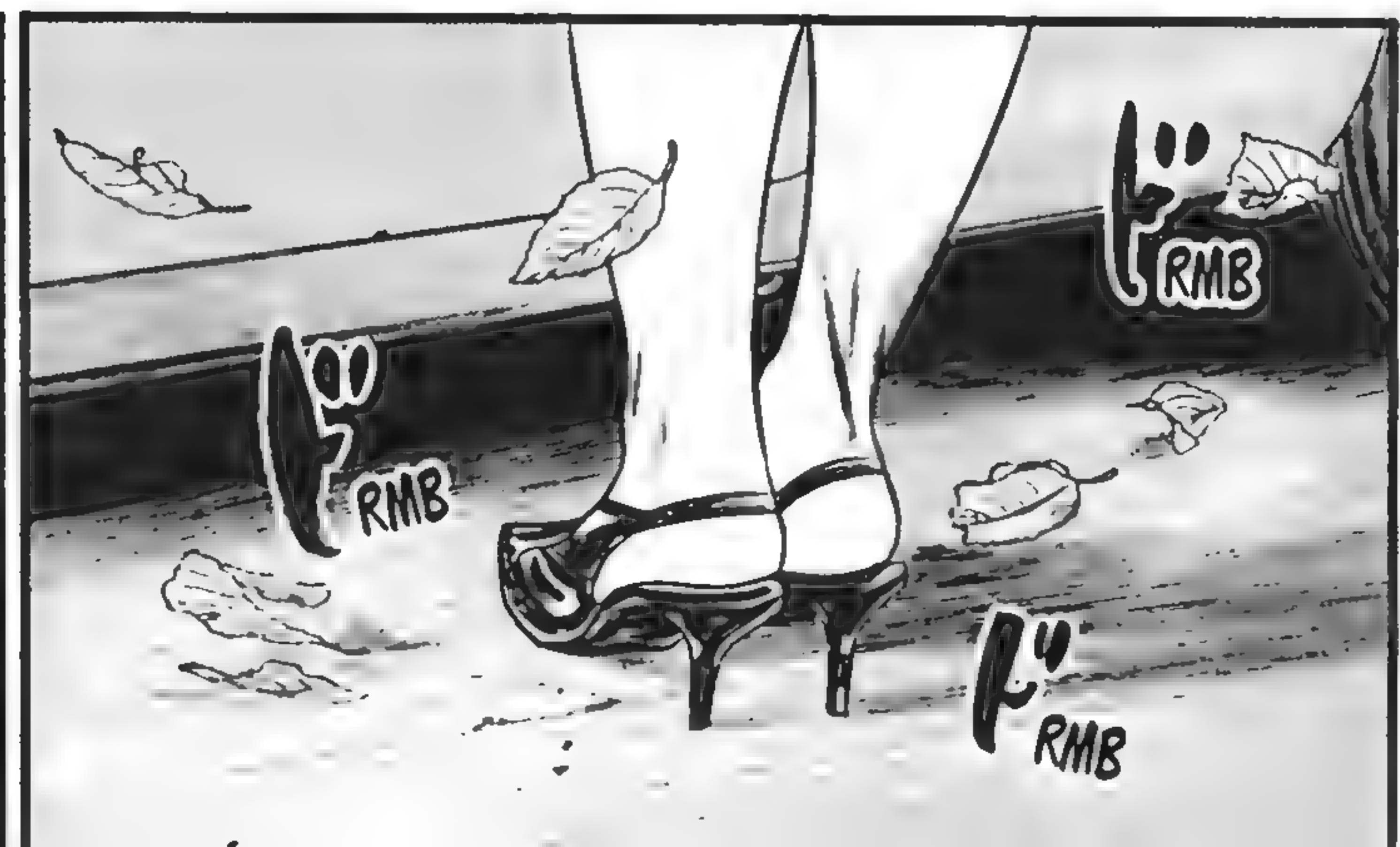
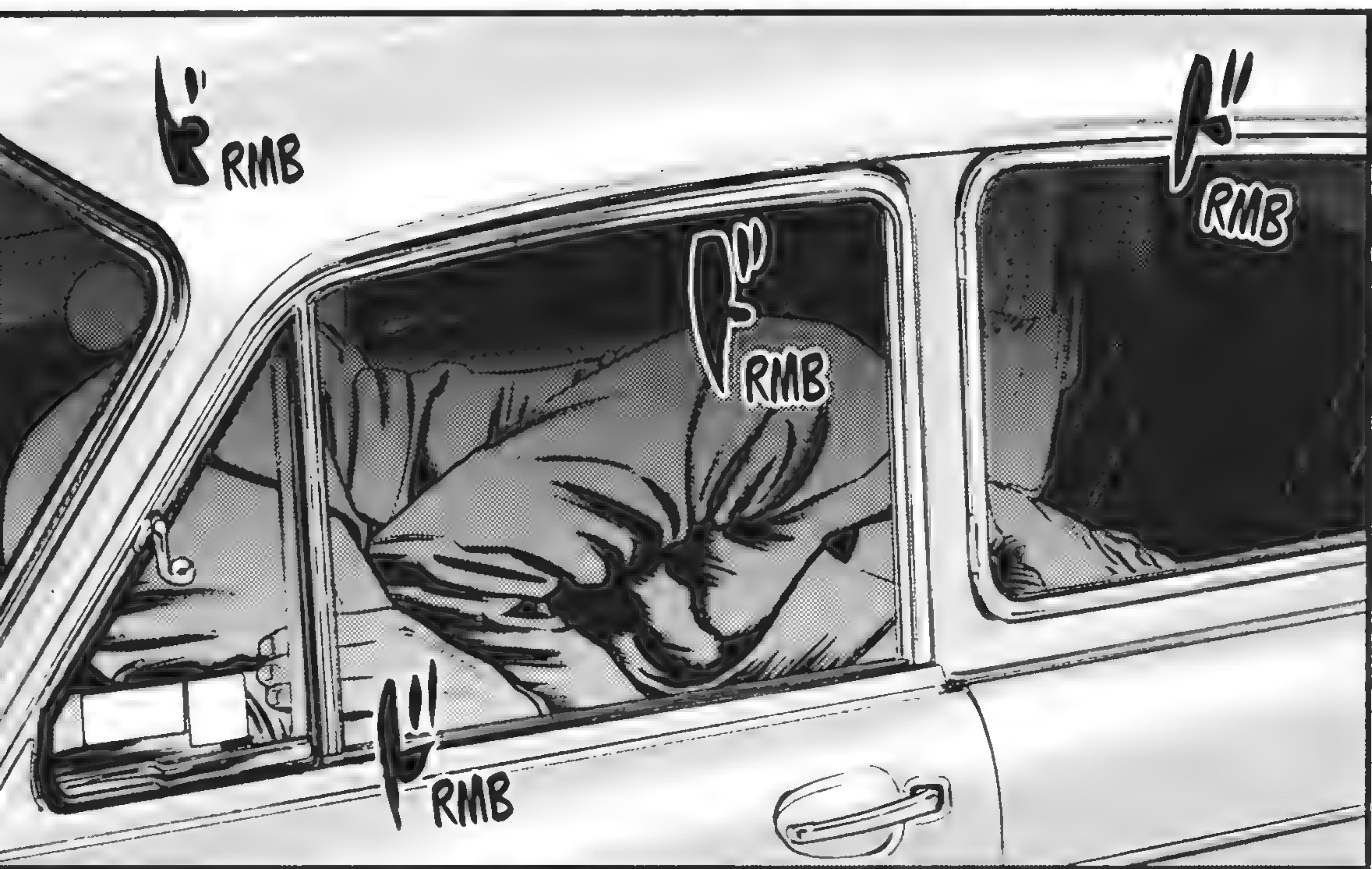
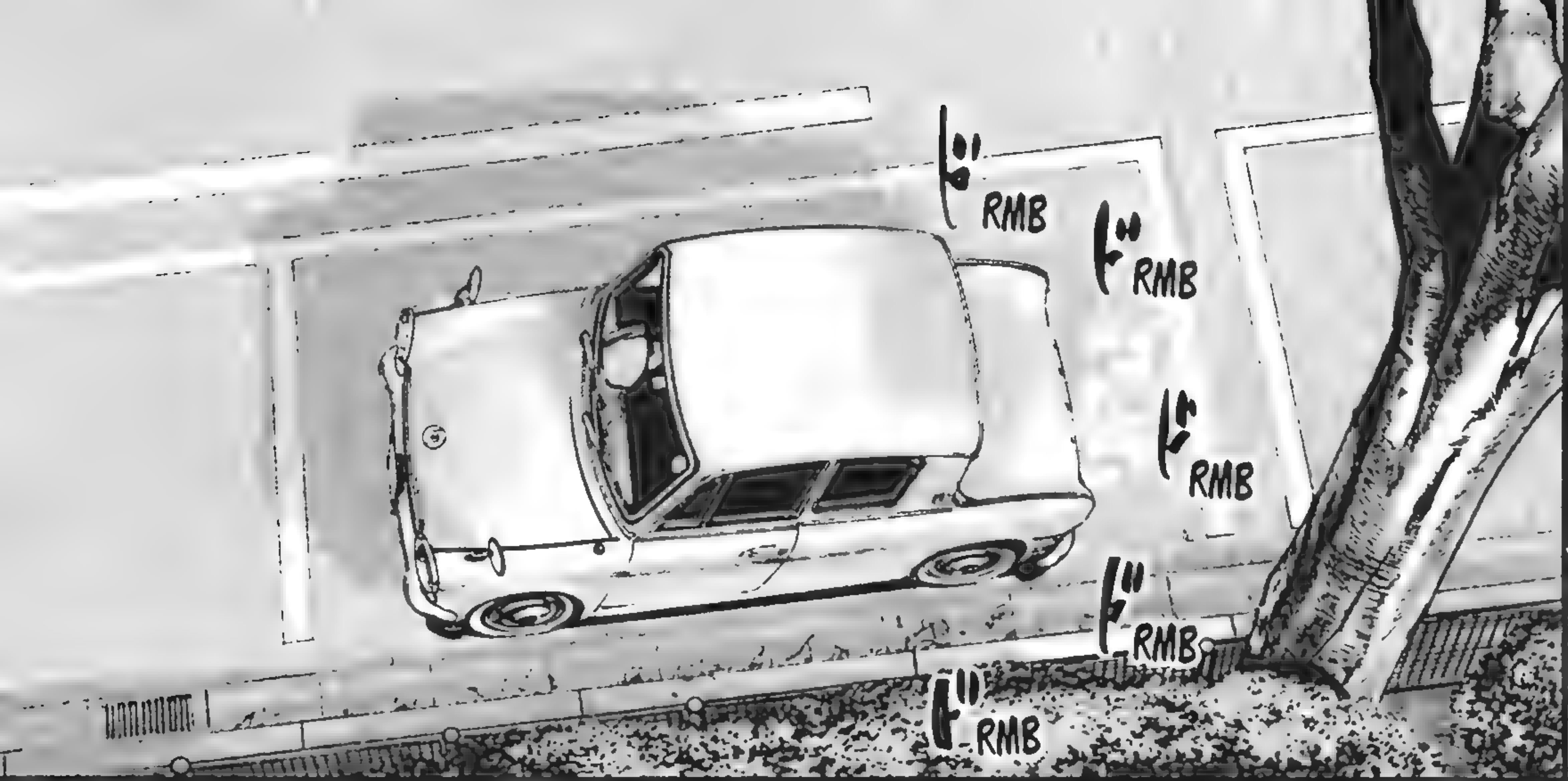








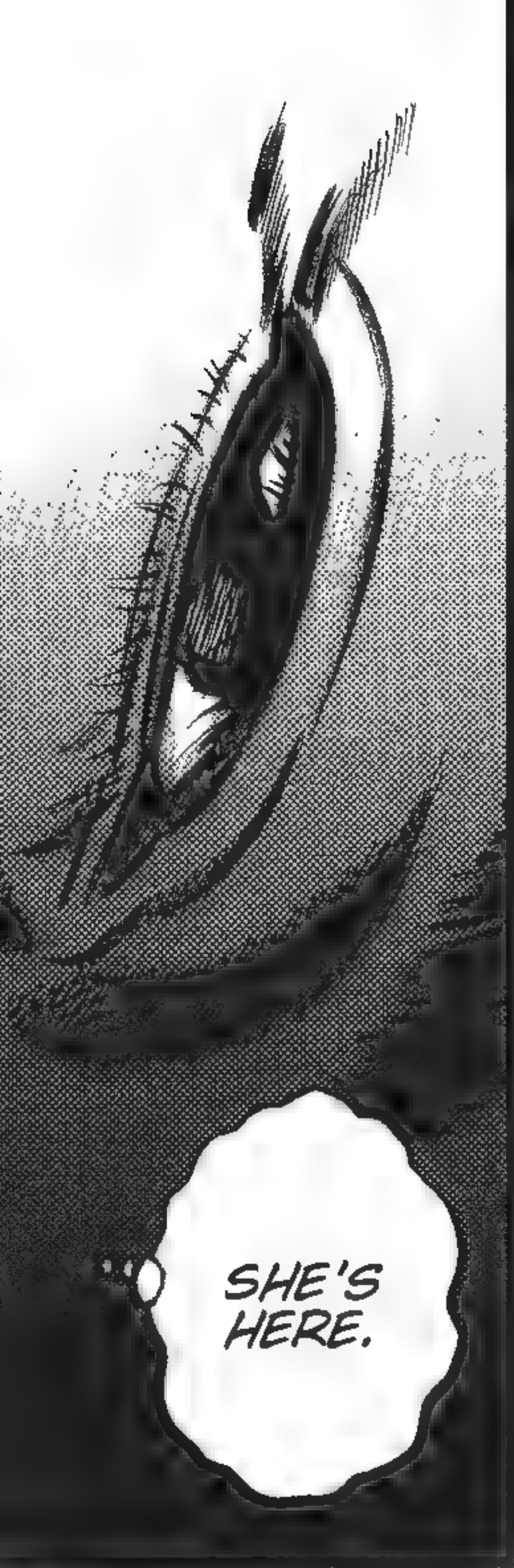












SHE'S  
HERE.



STARE...



GAZAG



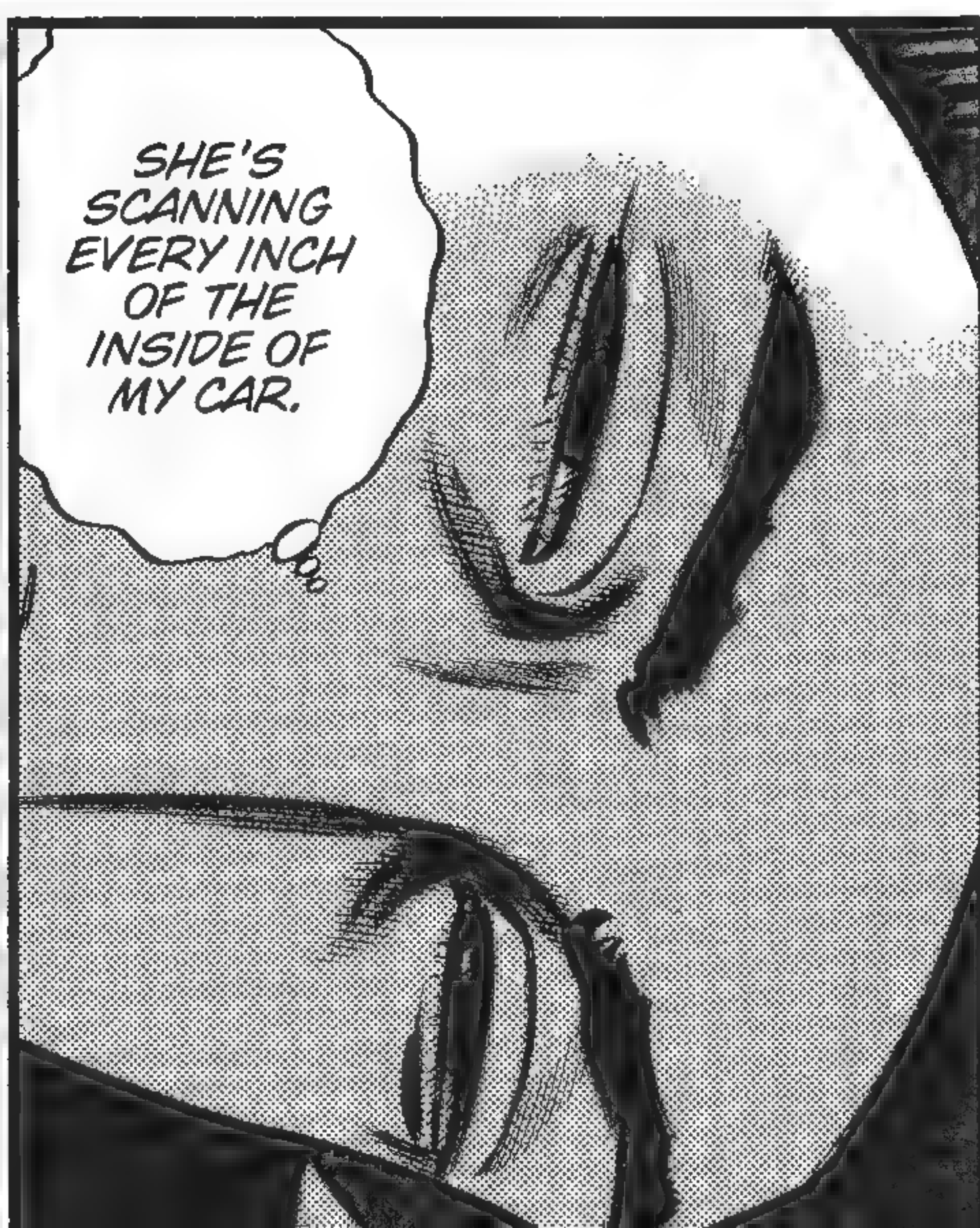
GAZAG



SQUEEZE

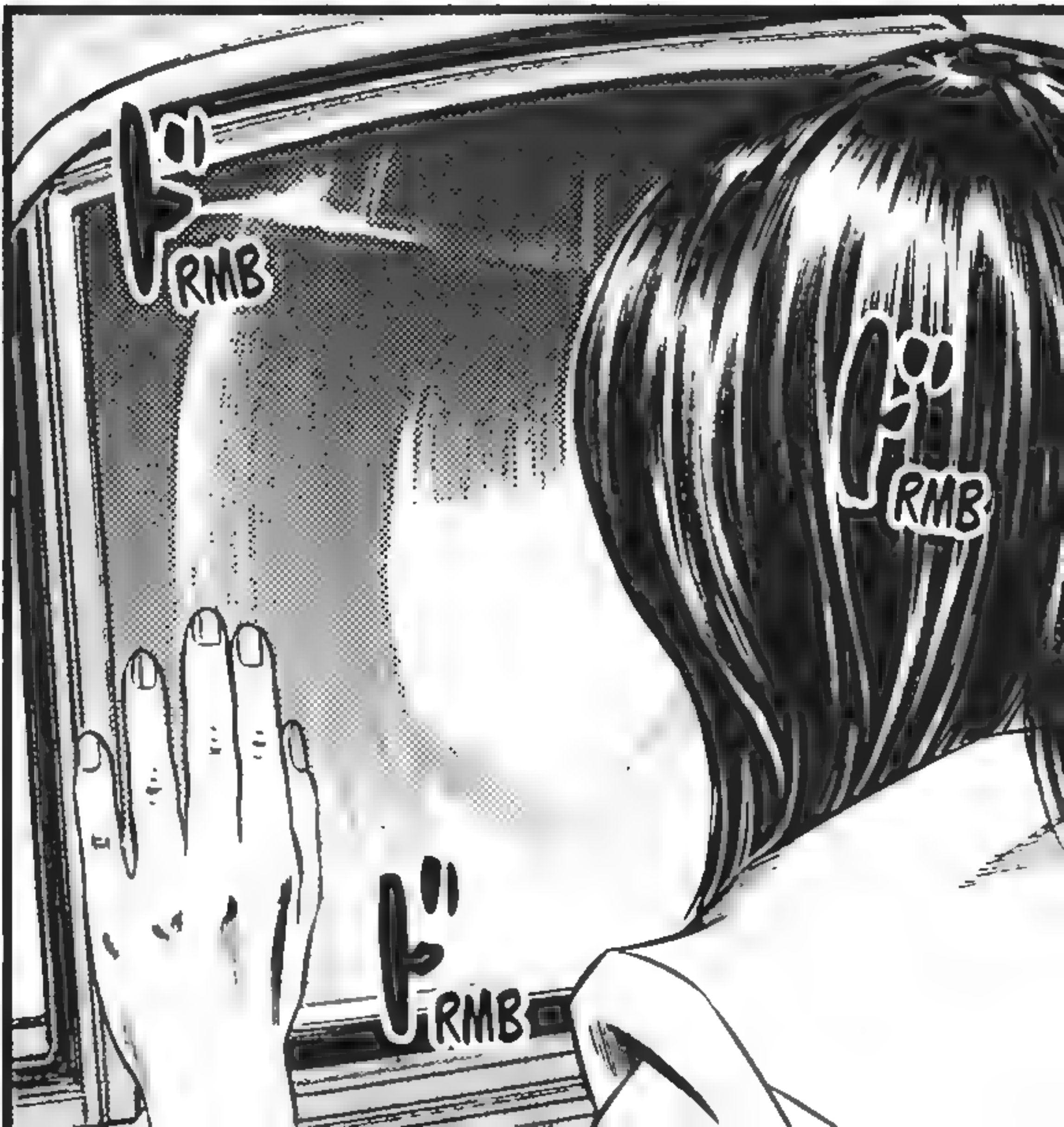
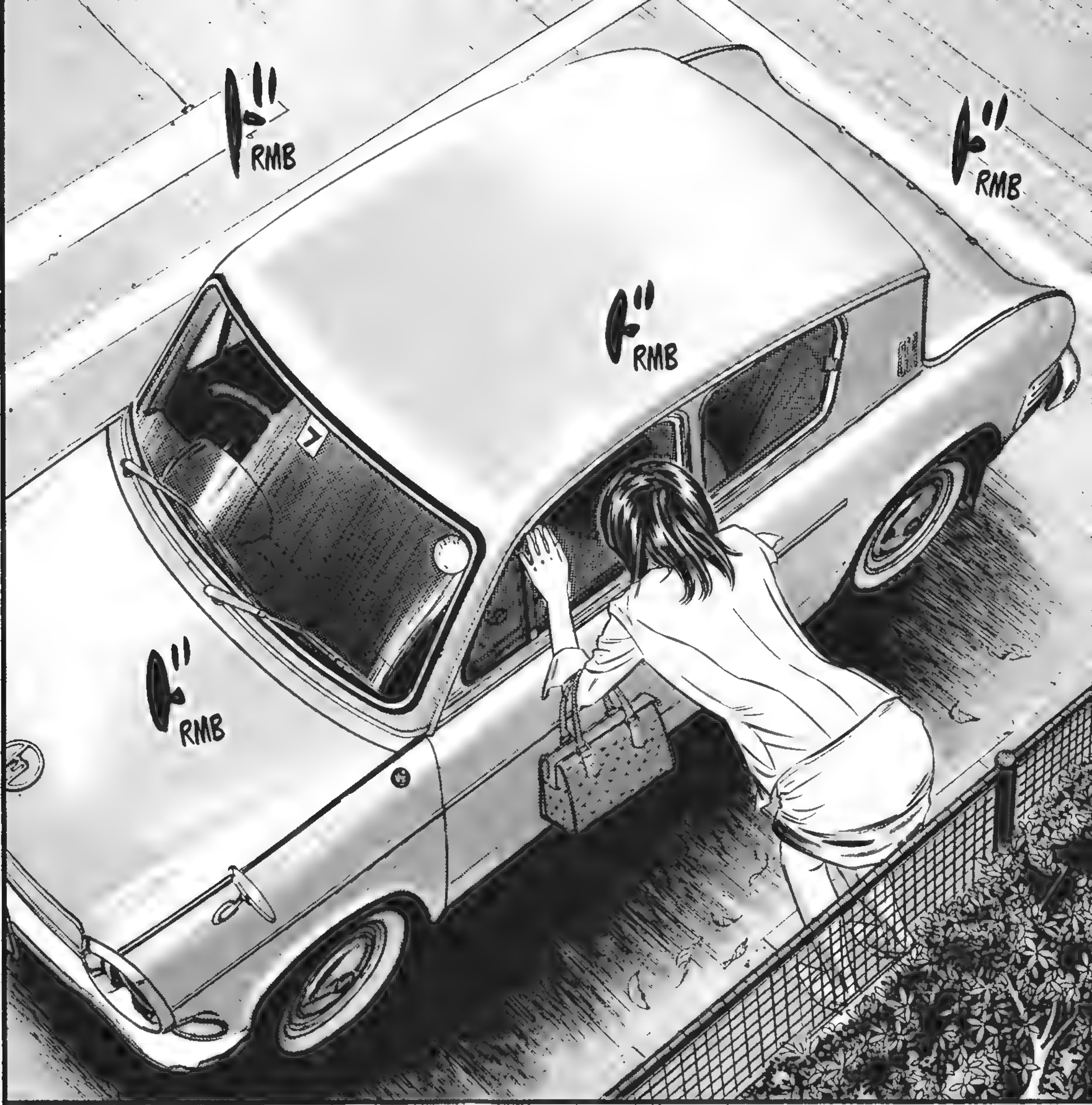


GAZAG

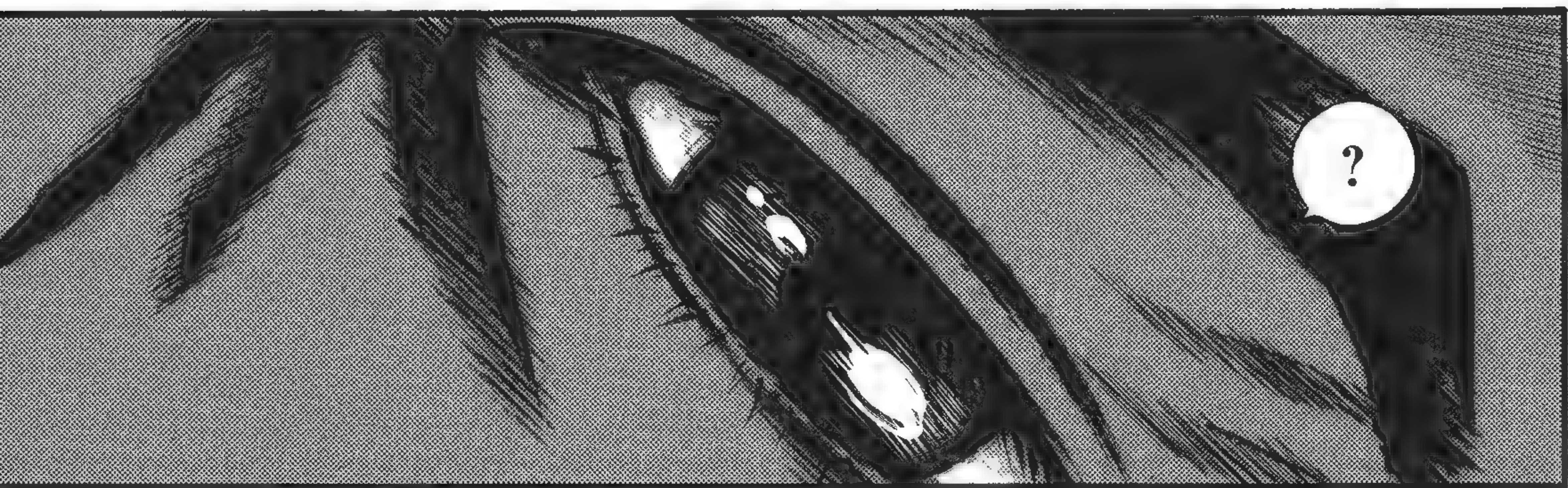
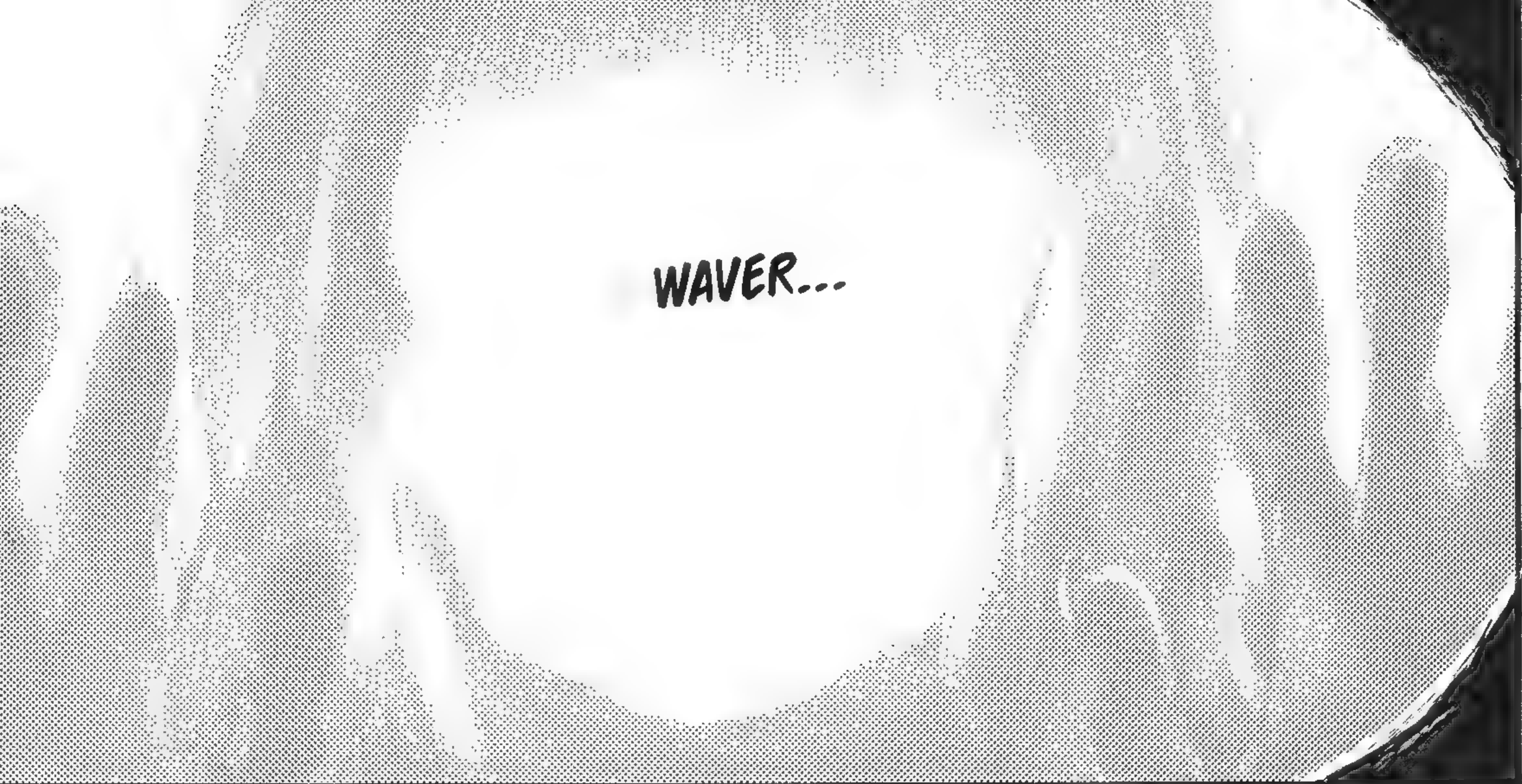


SHE'S  
SCANNING  
EVERY INCH  
OF THE  
INSIDE OF  
MY CAR.









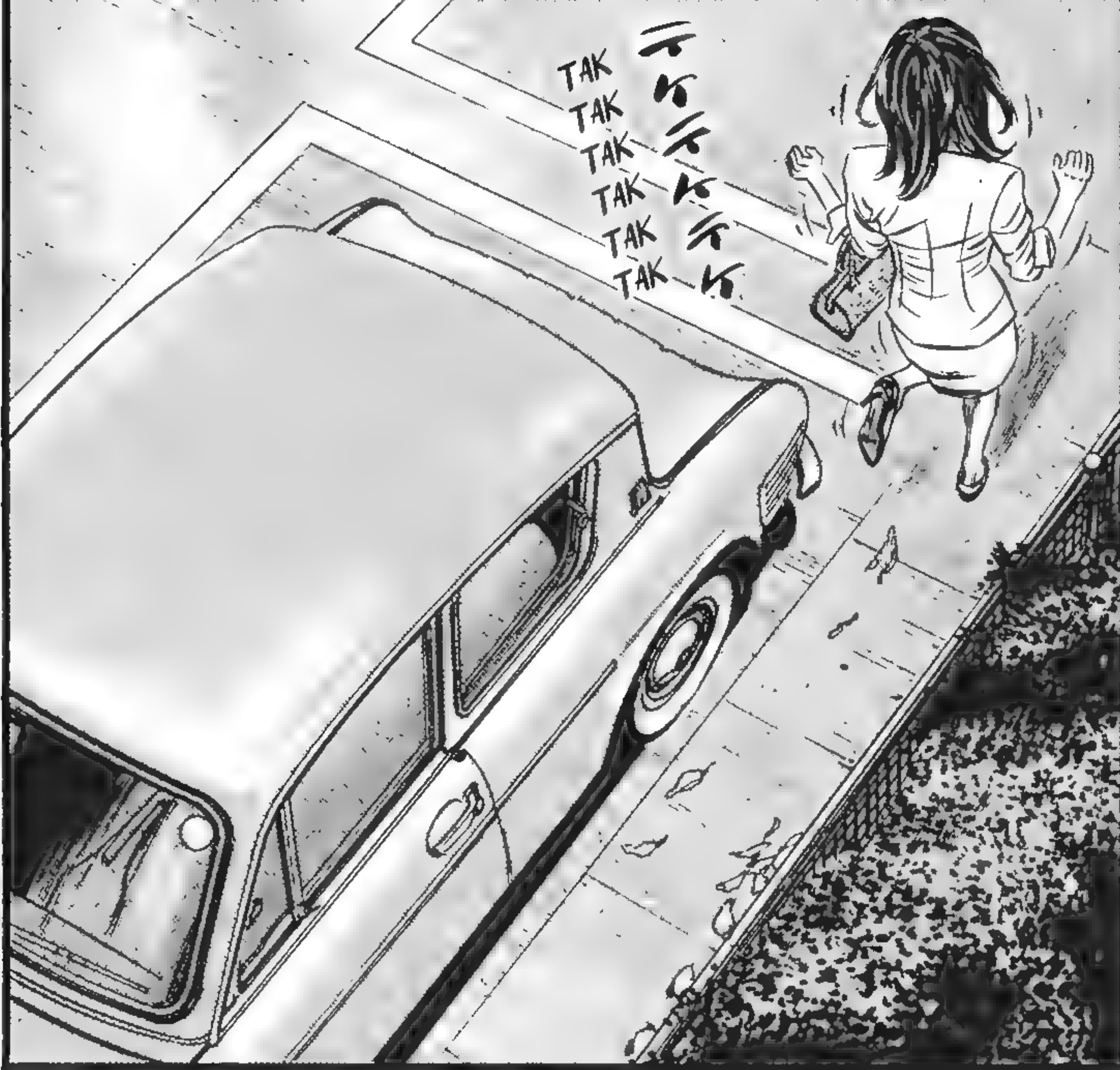
















THIS  
ISN'T A  
DREAM!



WASN'T  
A DREAM  
AFTER  
ALL...

THE  
FACE-  
LESS  
WOMAN  
...

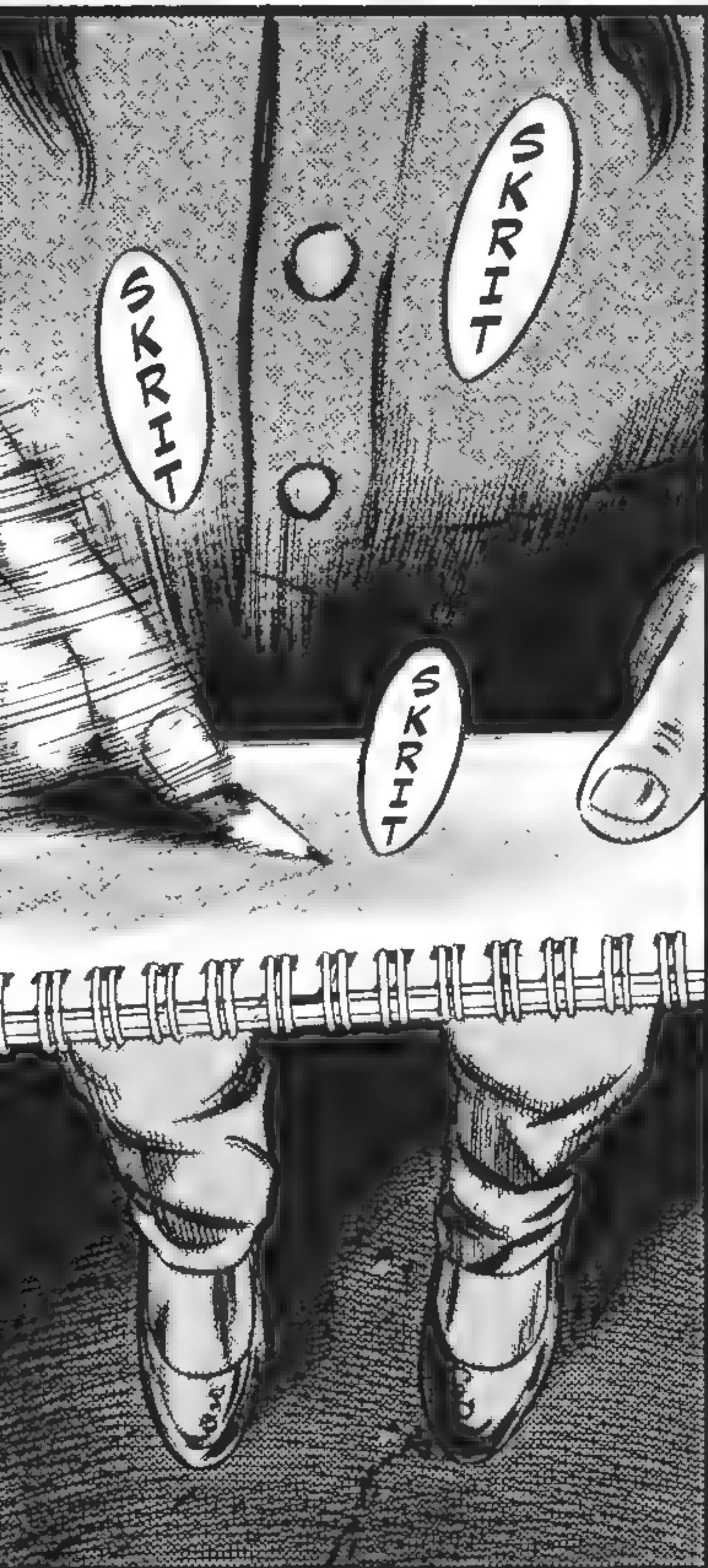


NA...

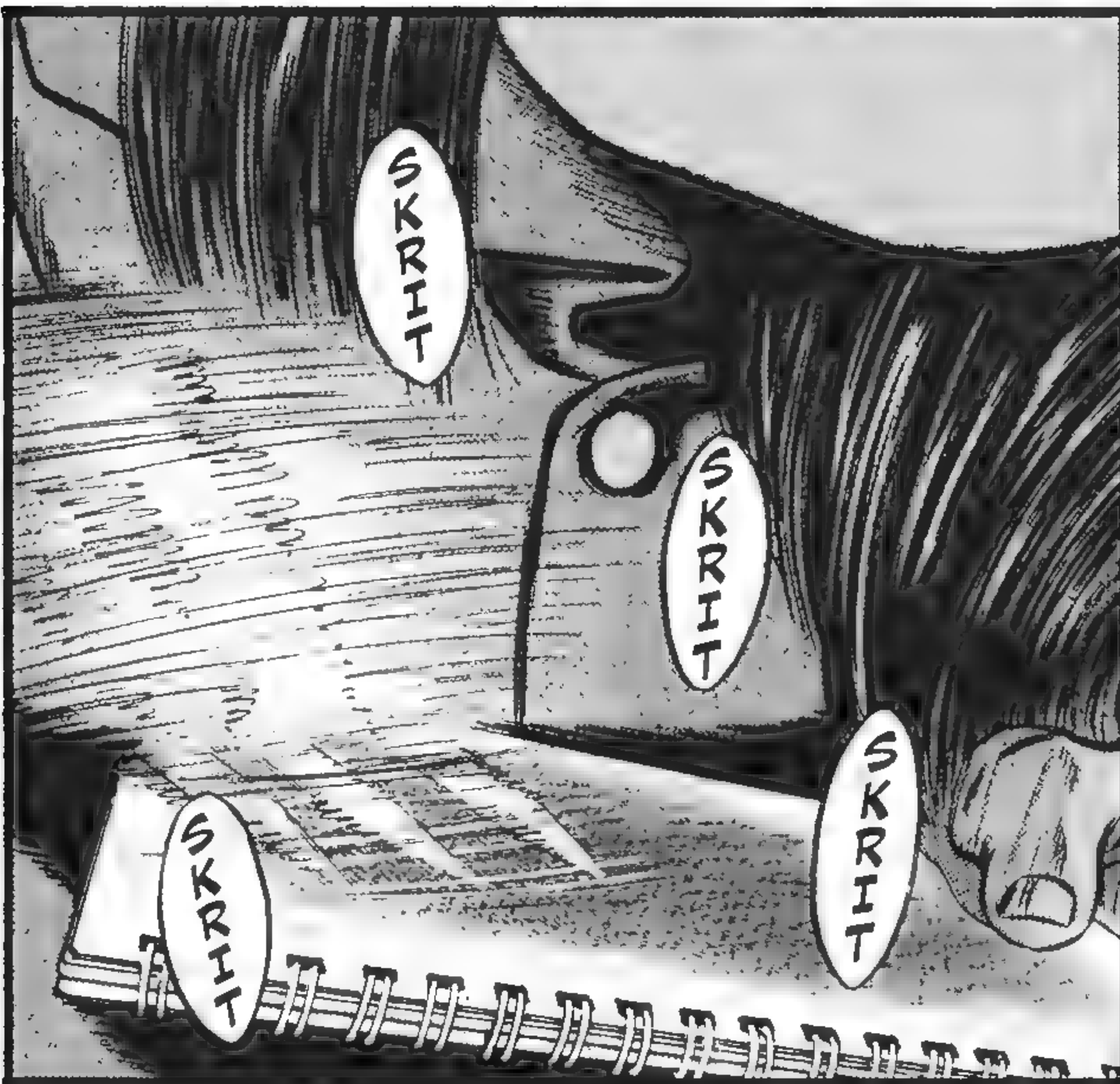




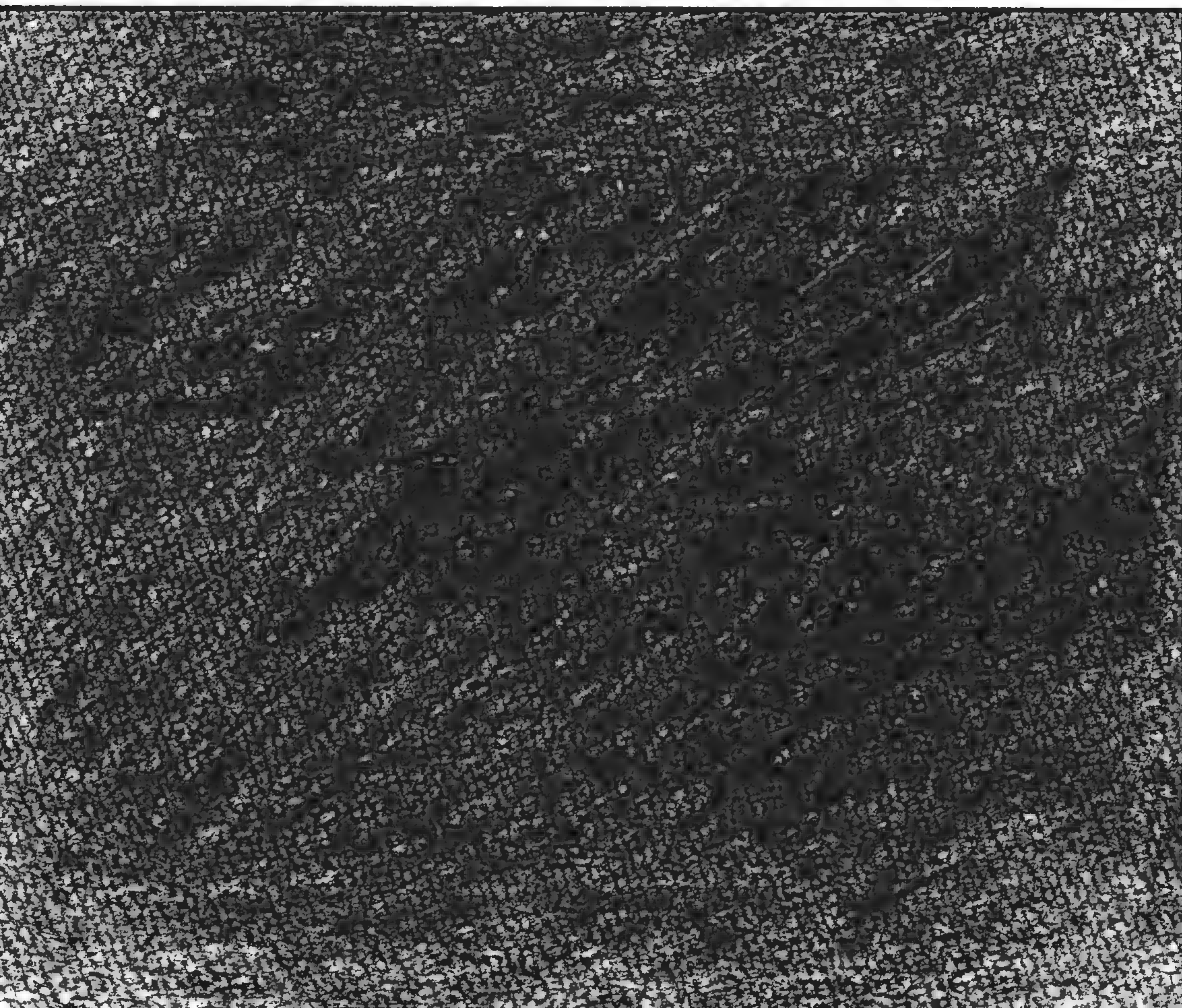
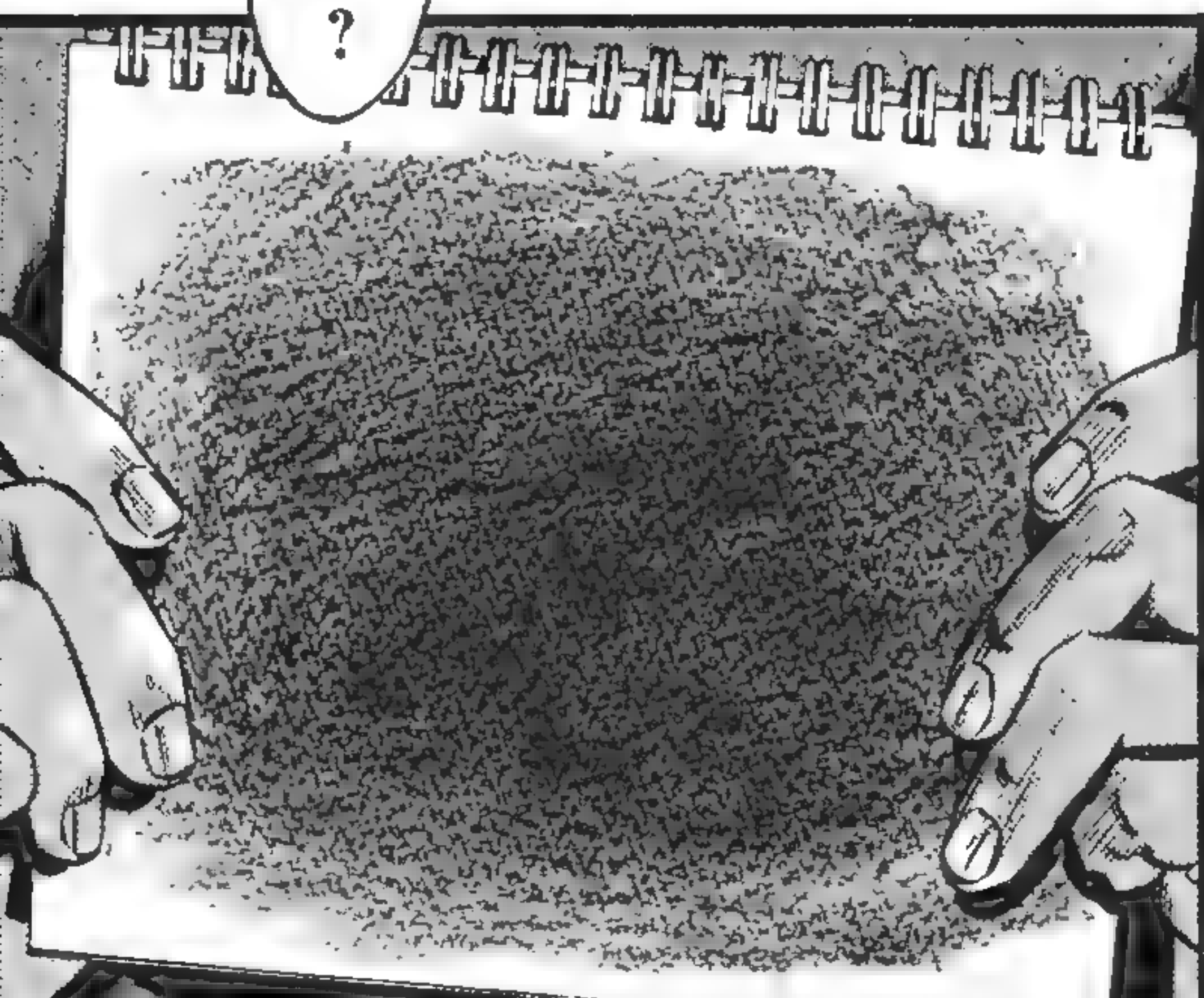












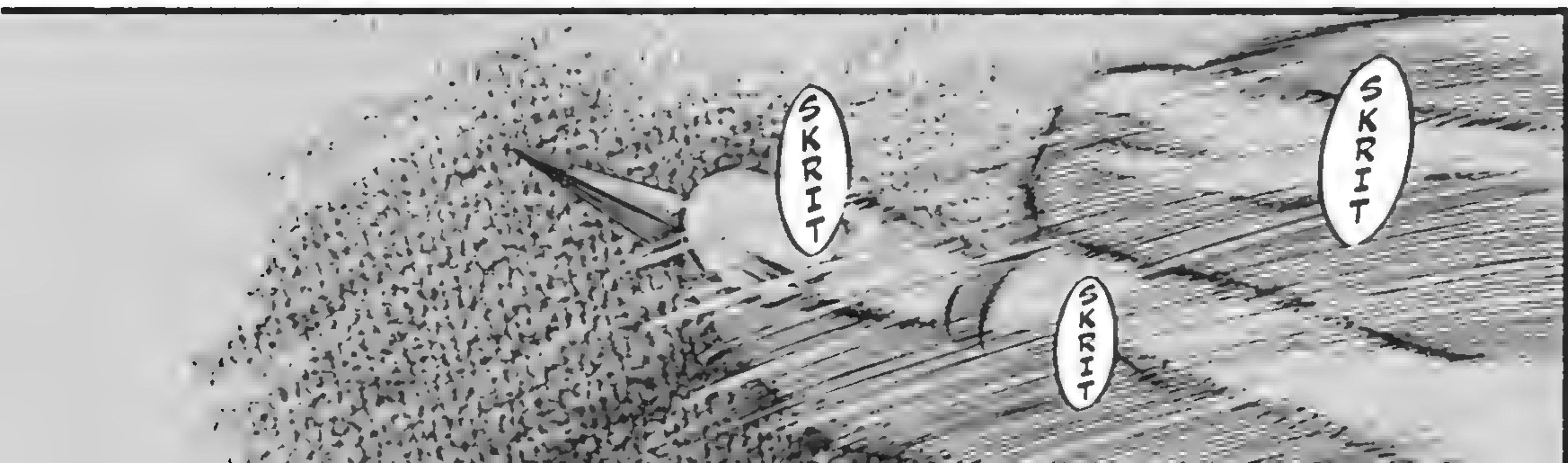




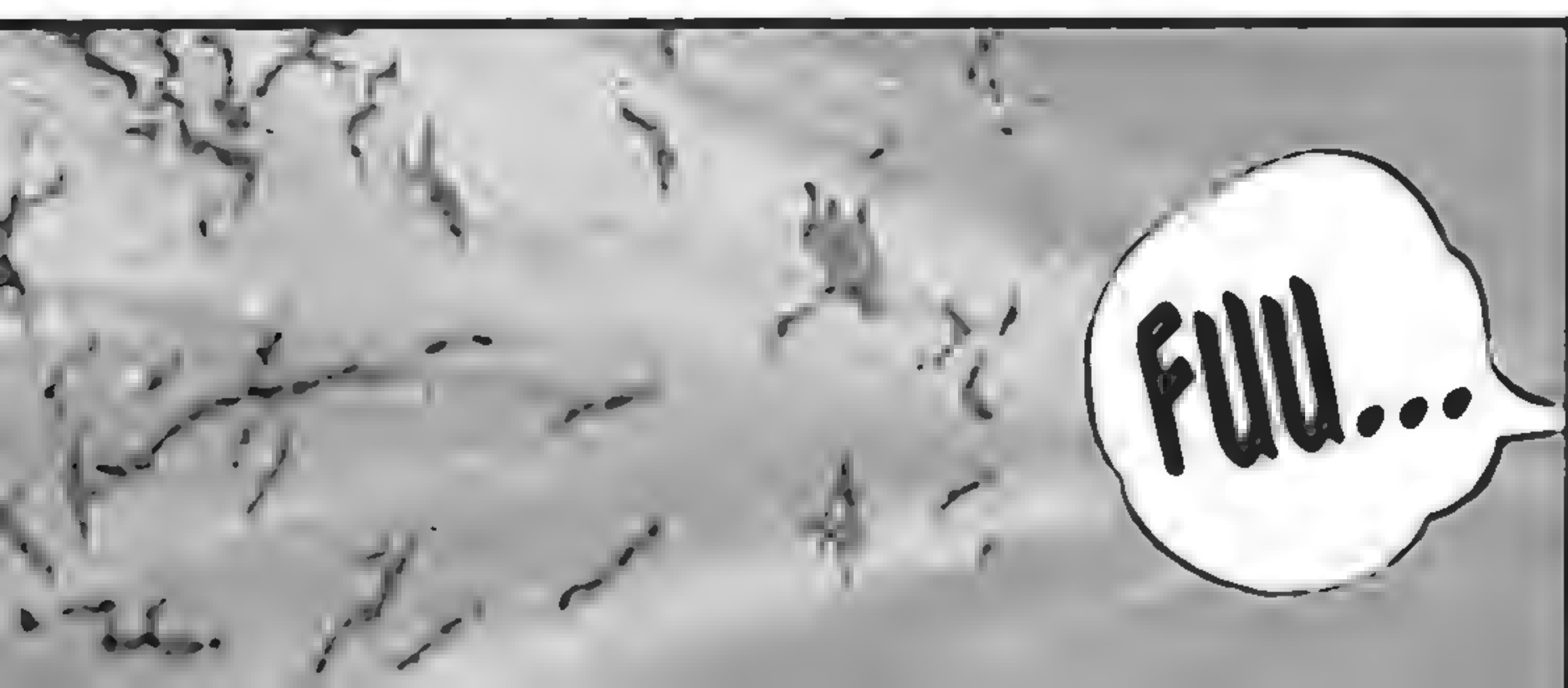
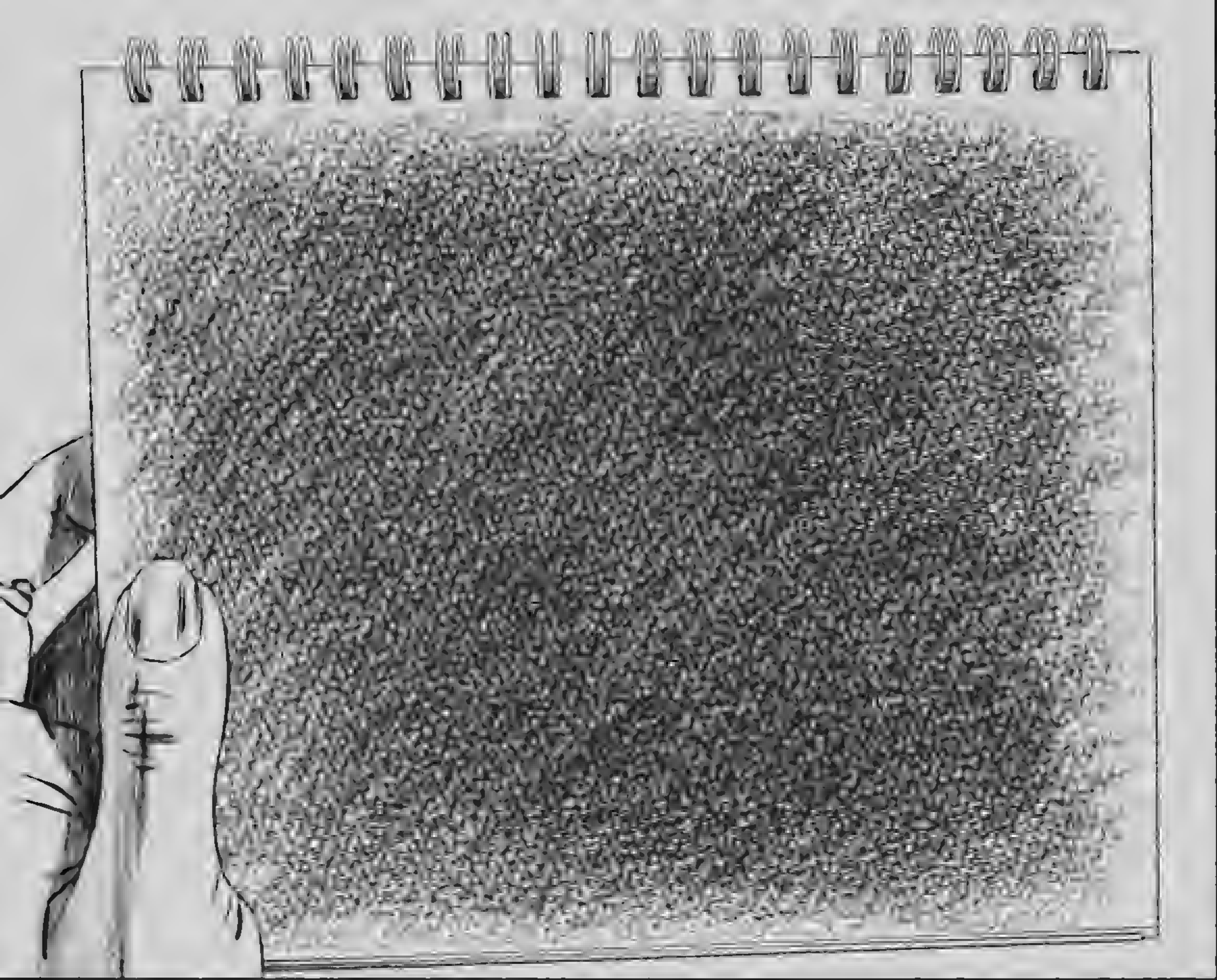




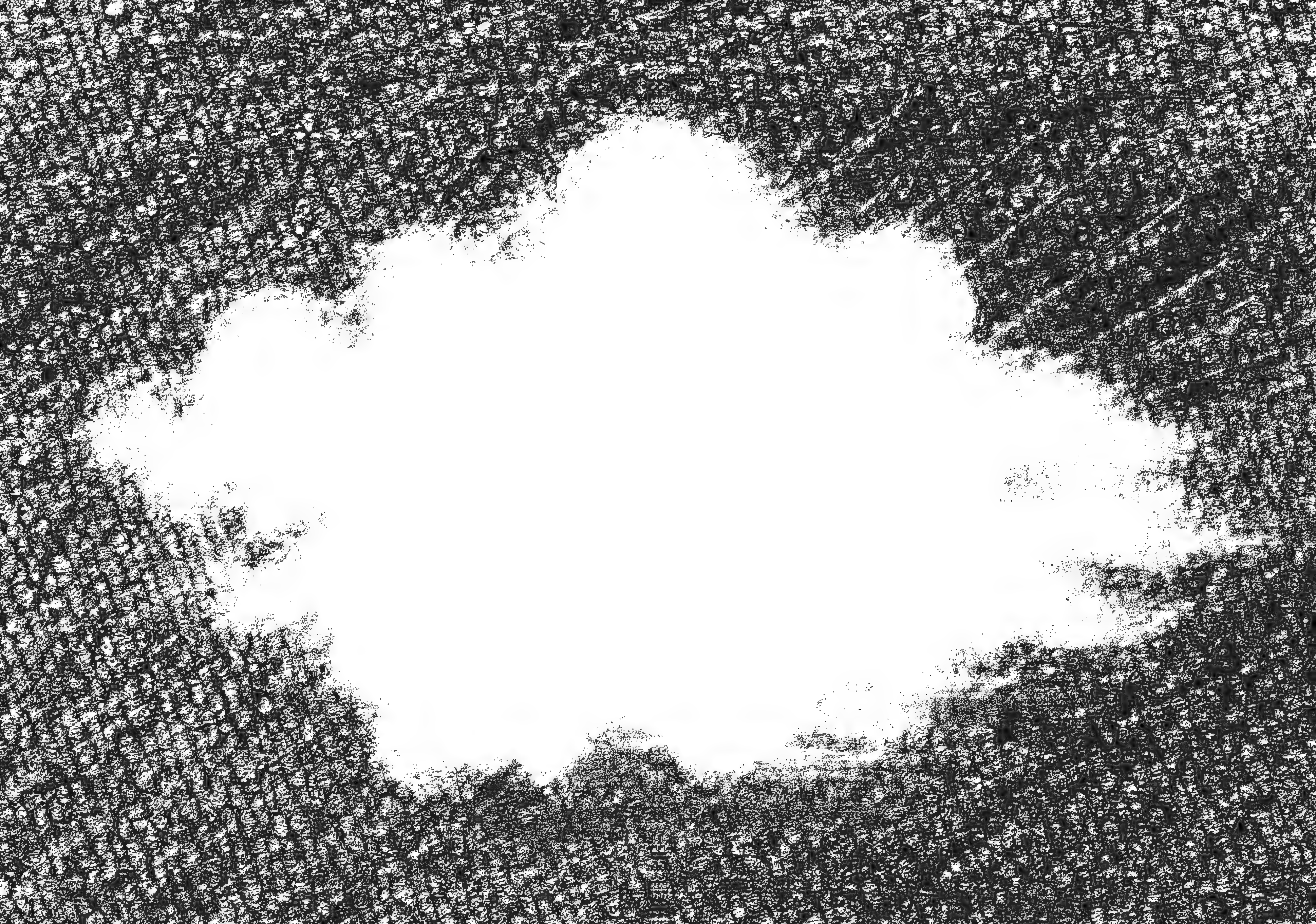




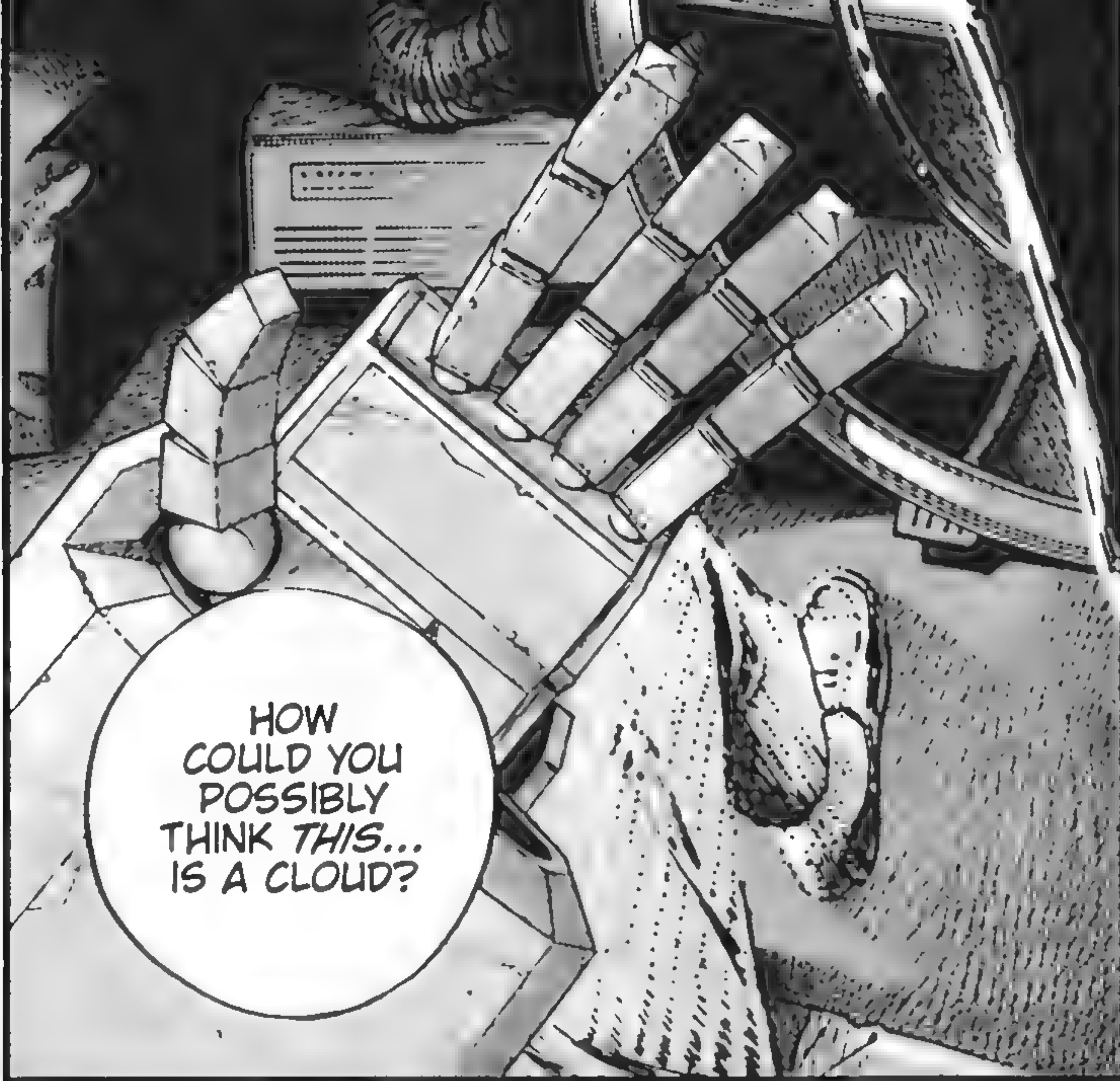










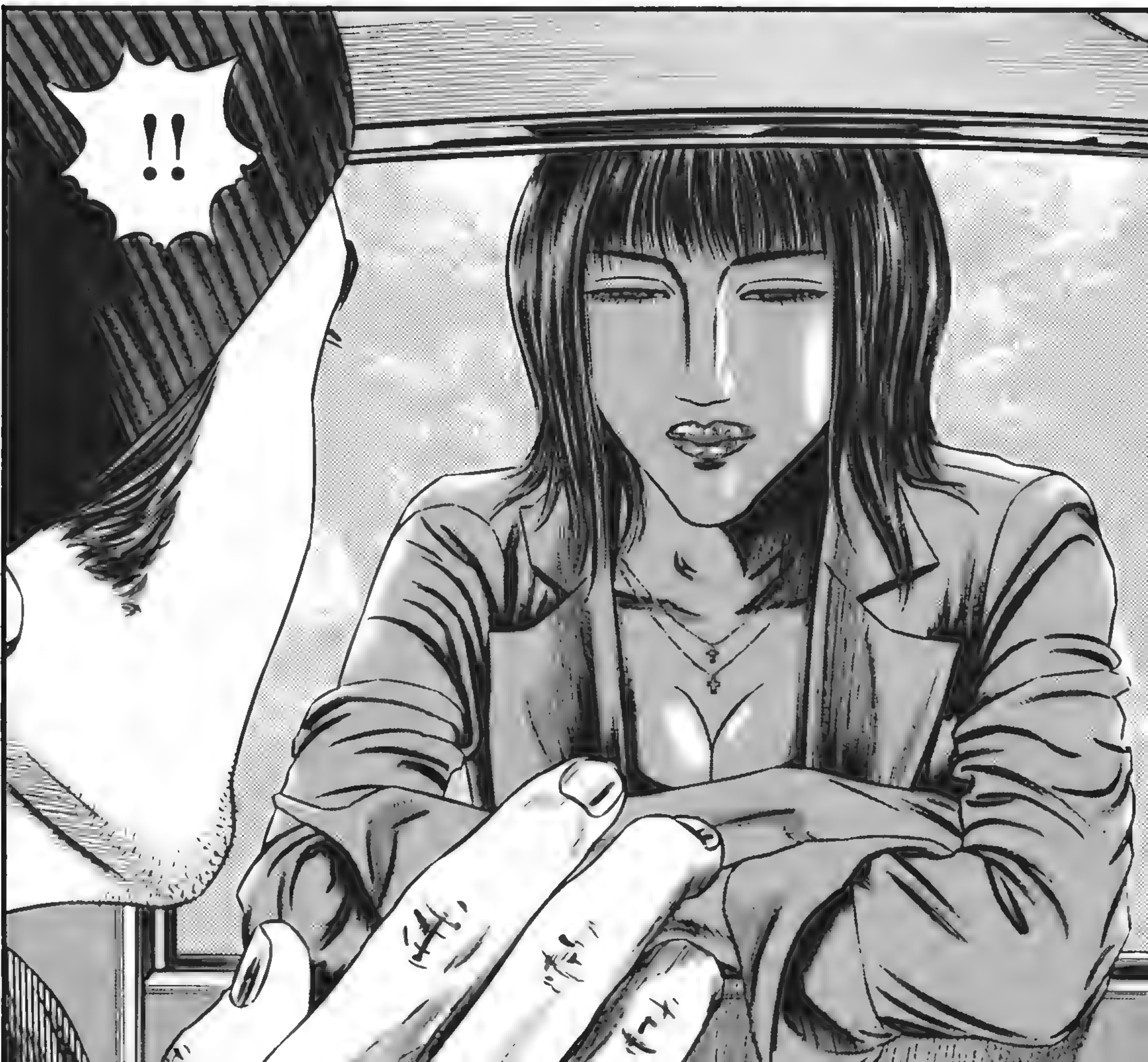


HOW  
COULD YOU  
POSSIBLY  
THINK *THIS*...  
IS A CLOUD?



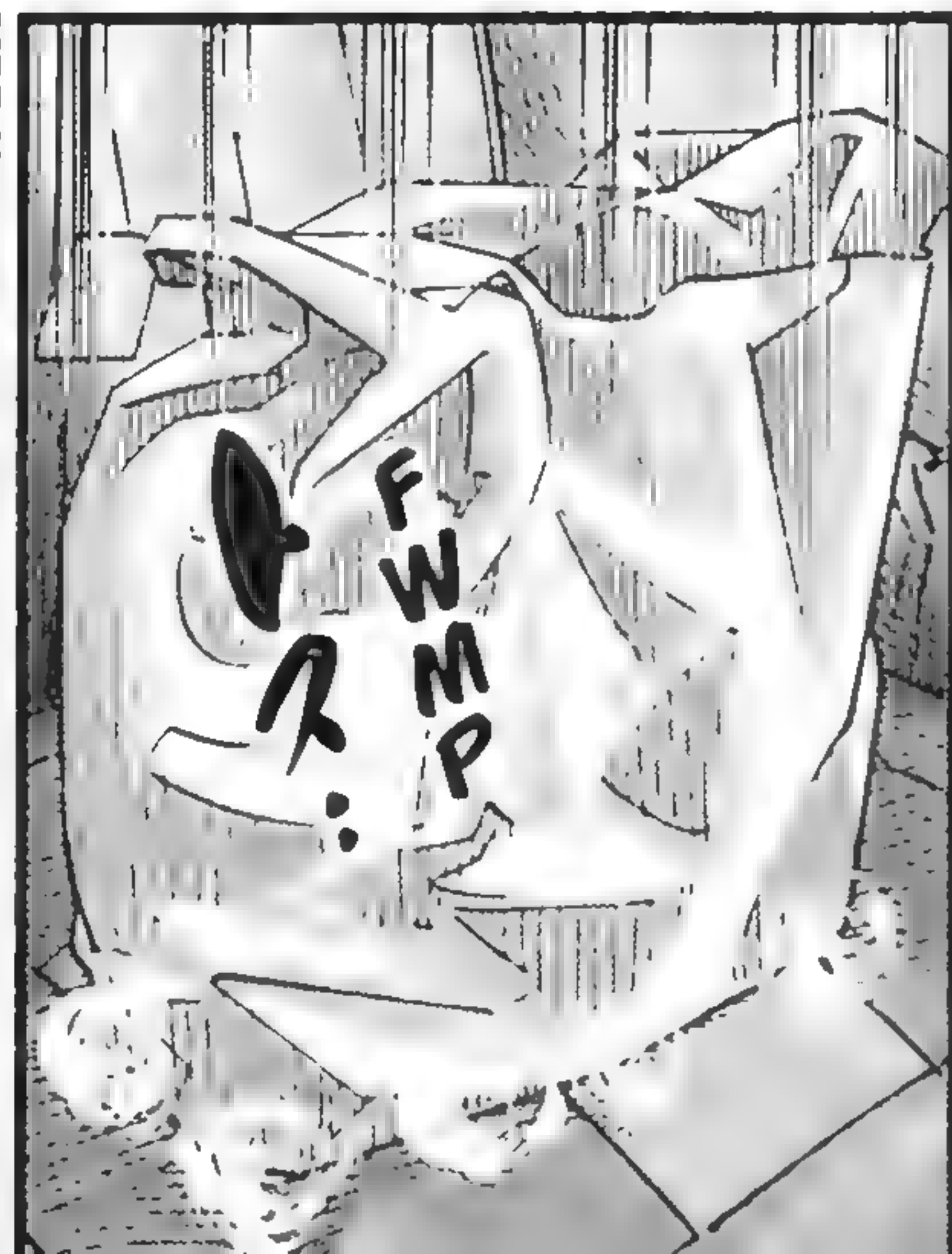
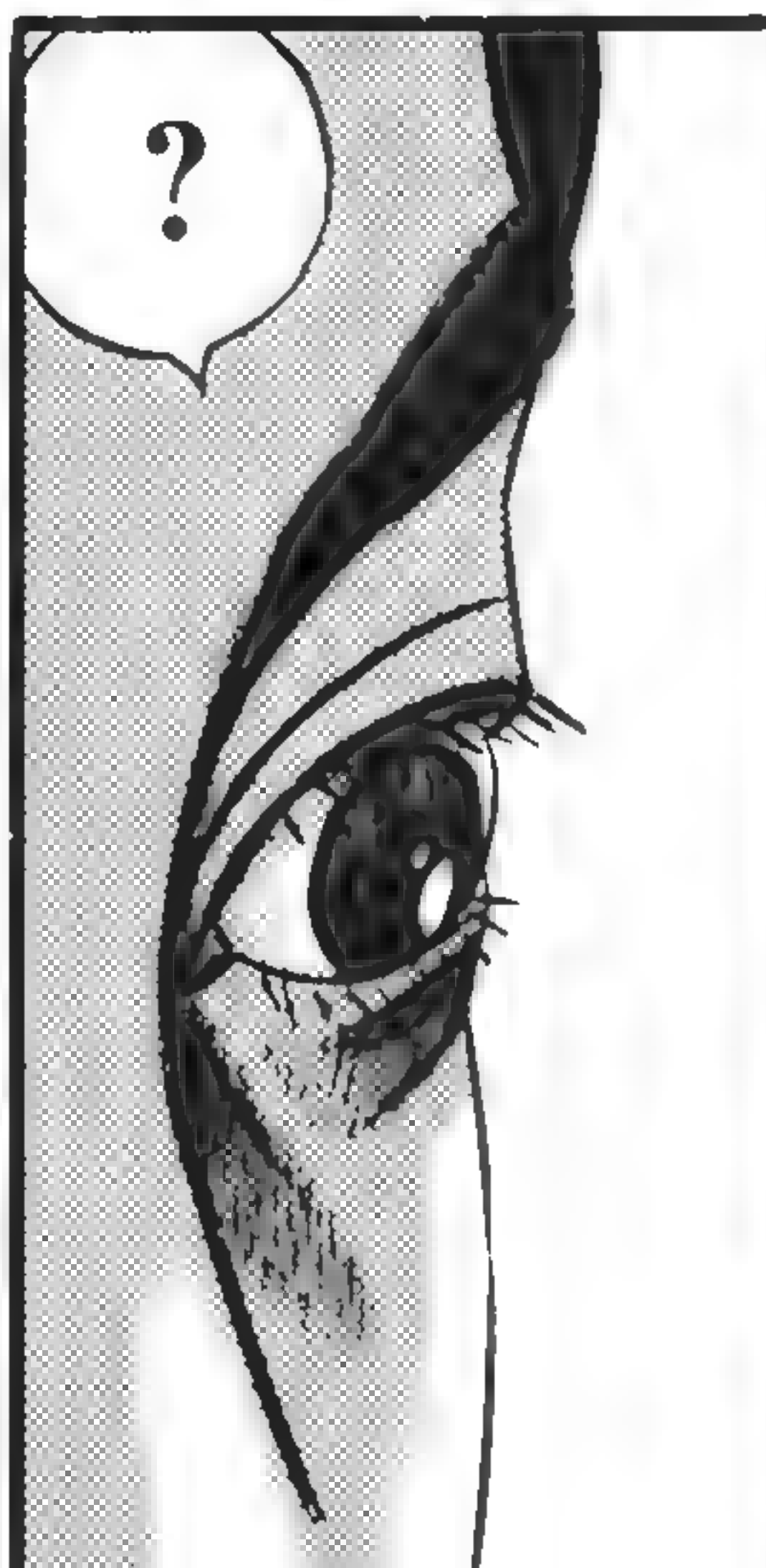
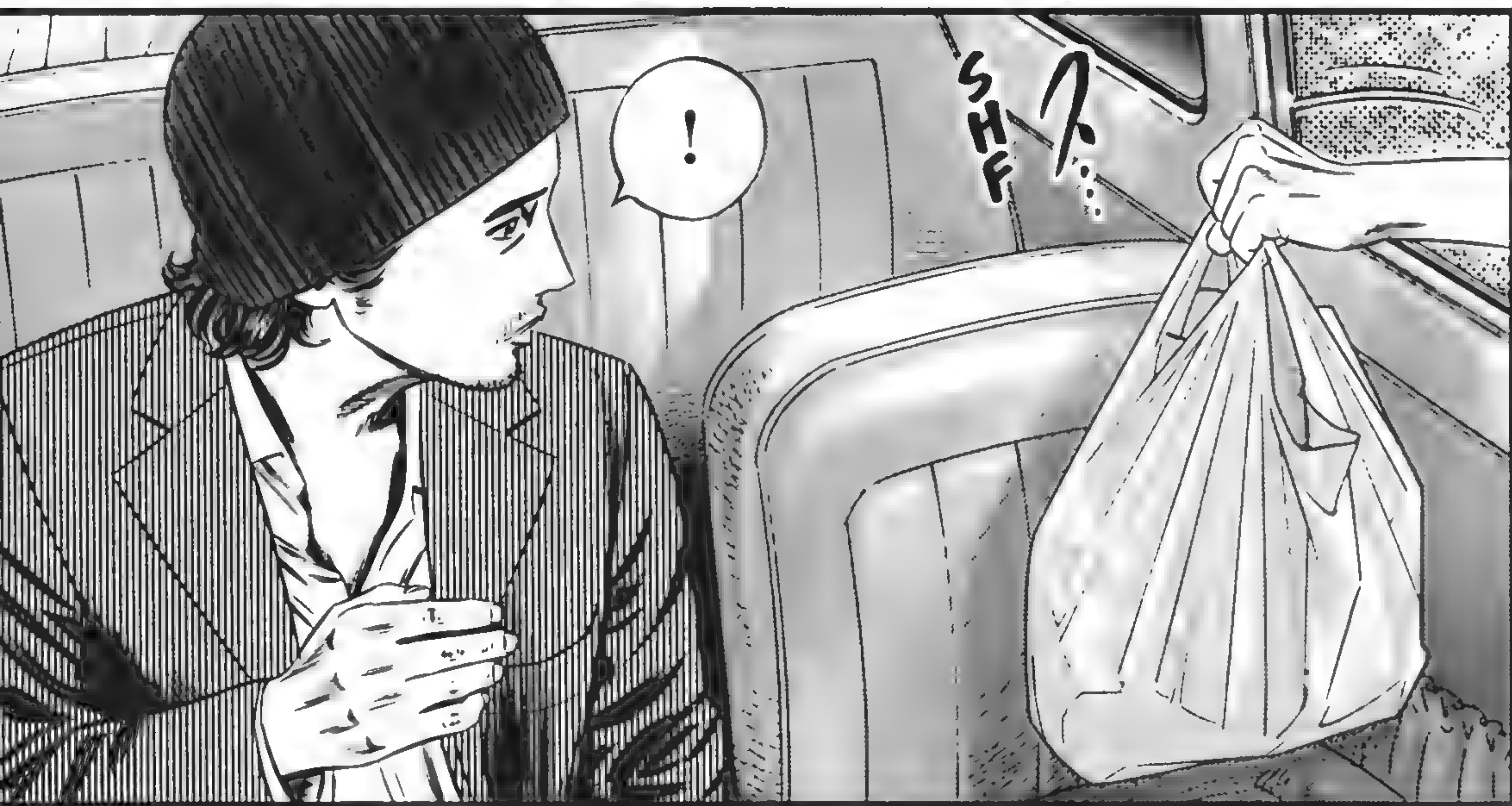
HEH  
...

SMIRK

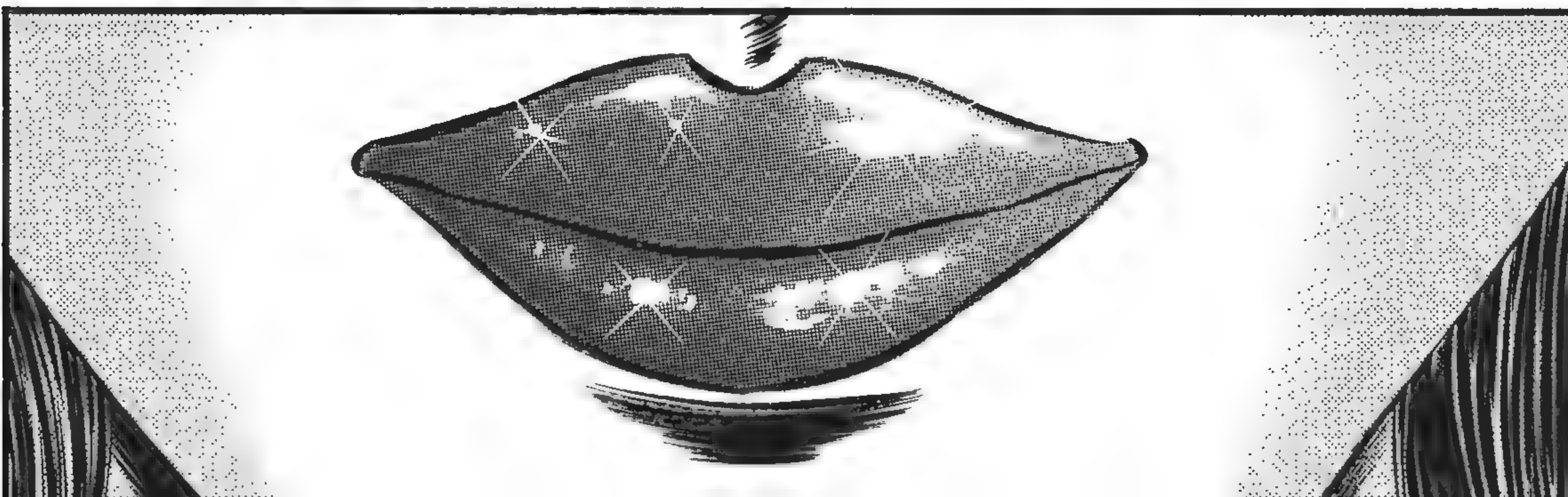
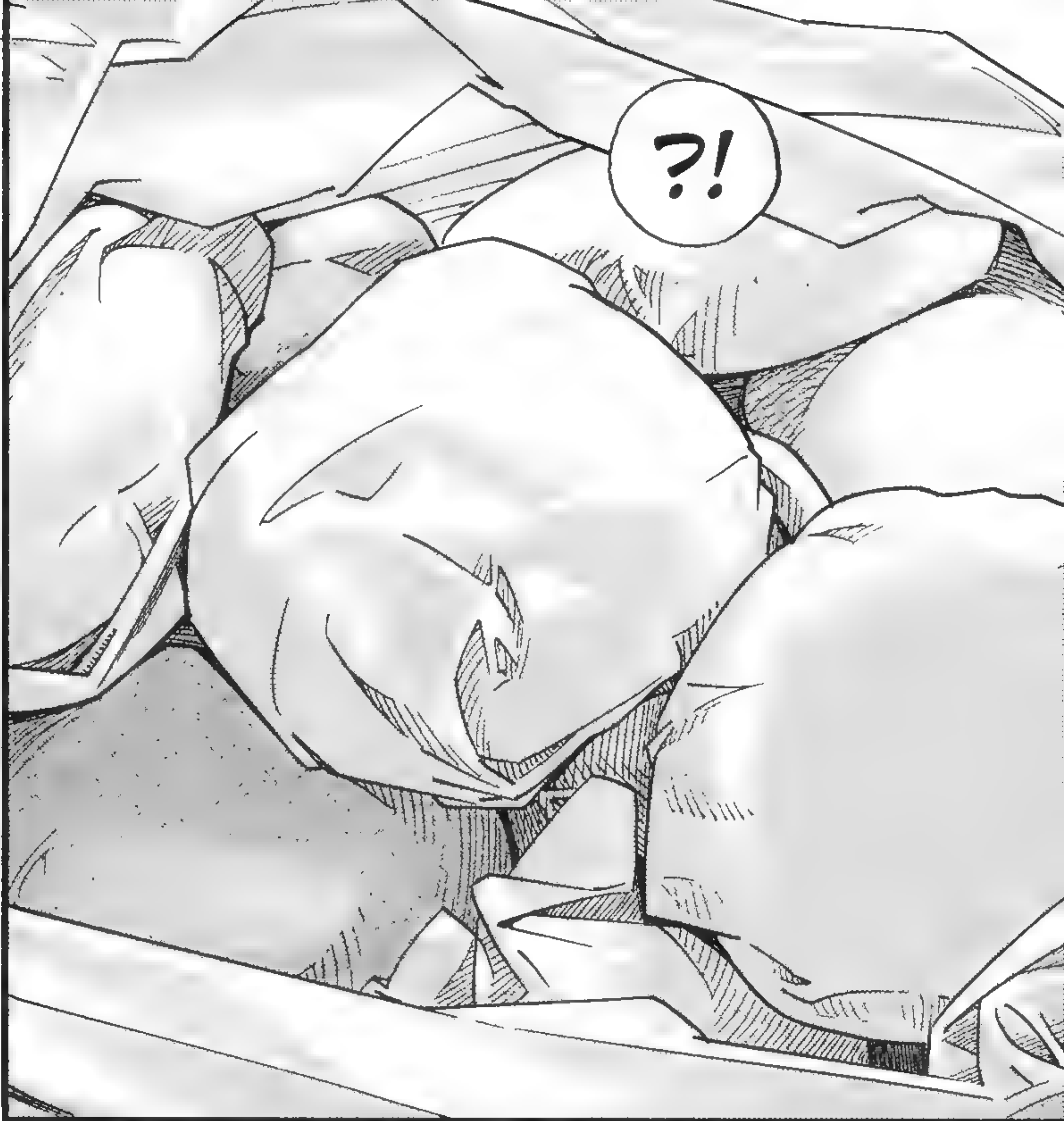


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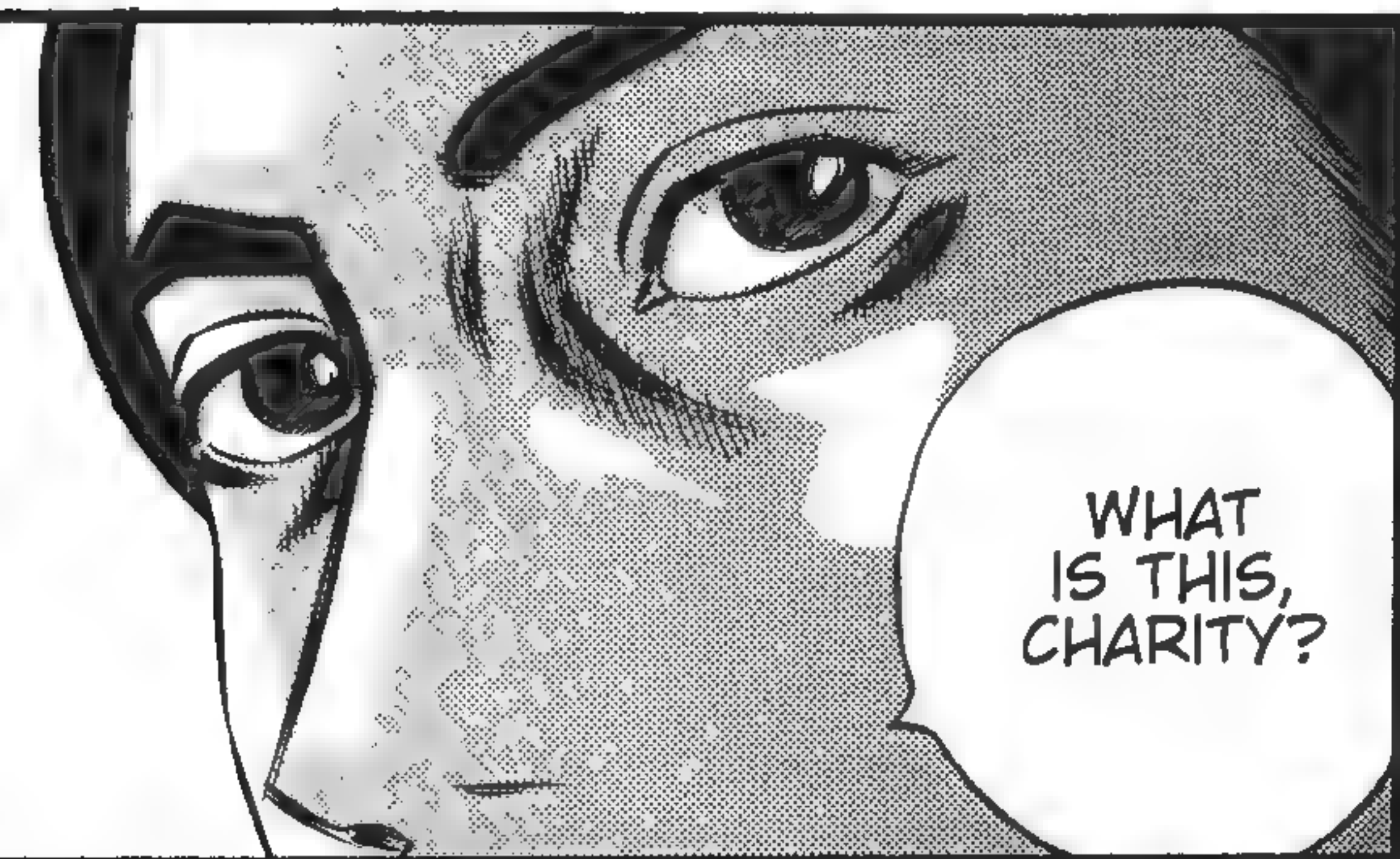
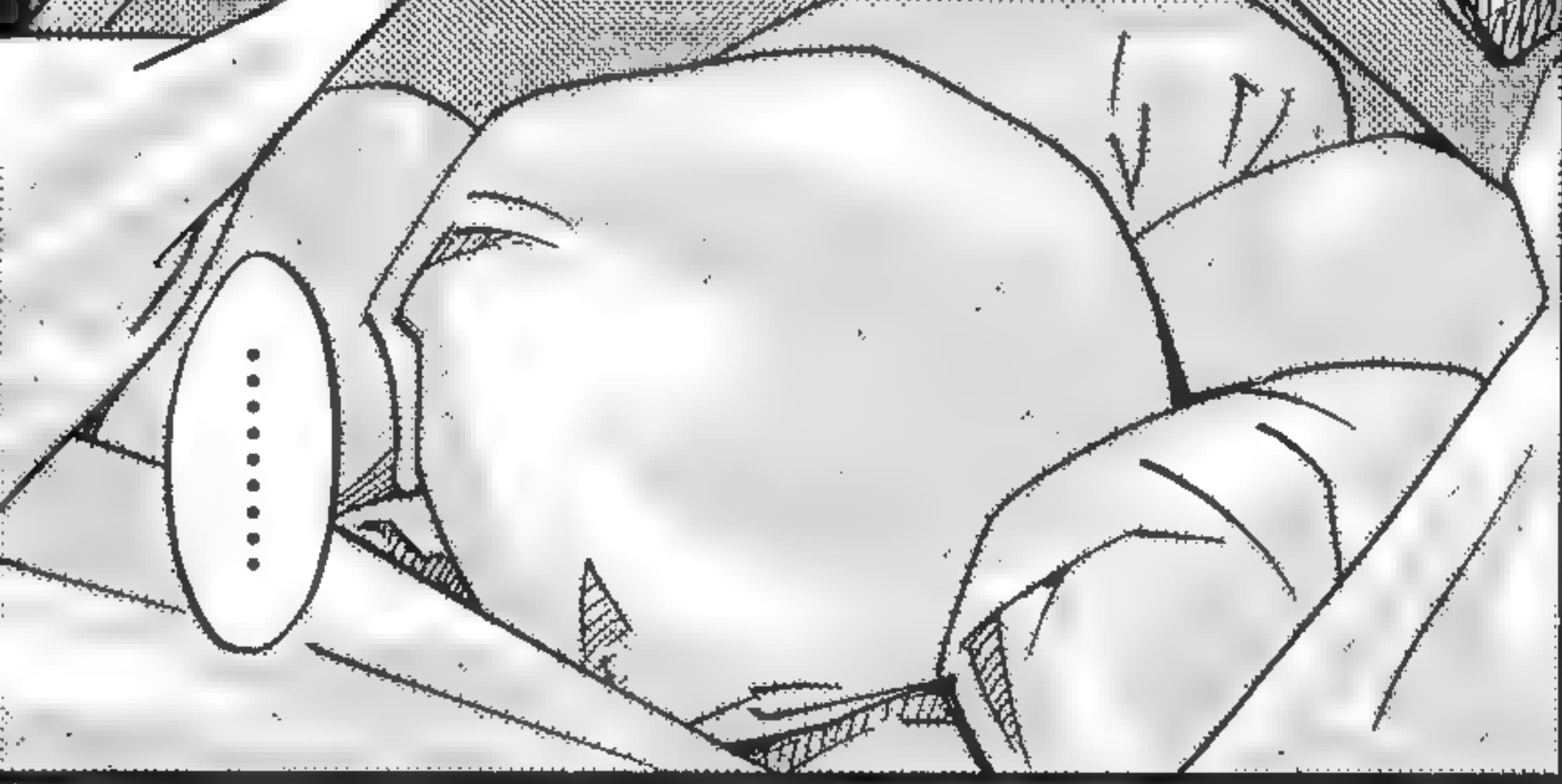




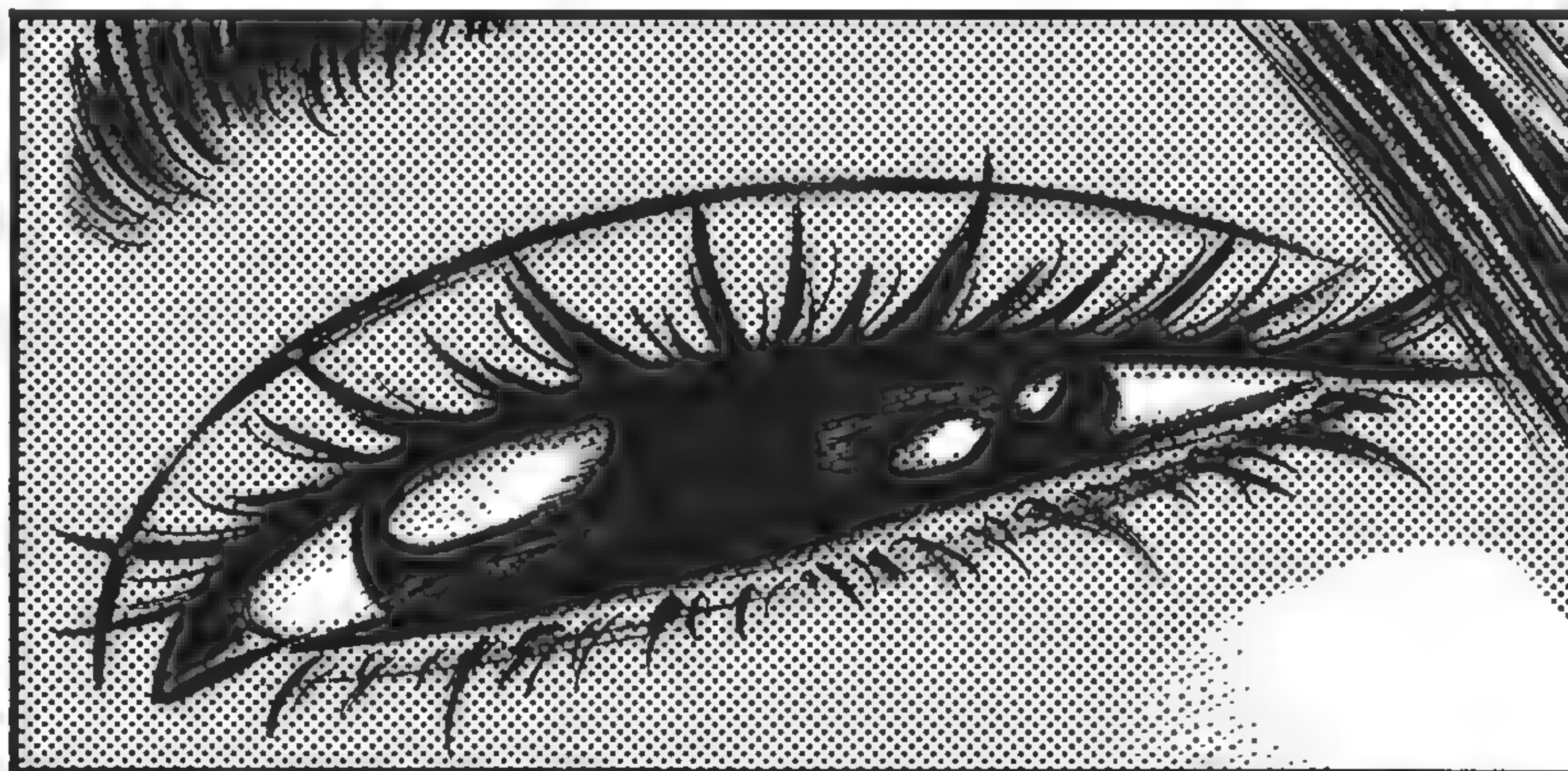




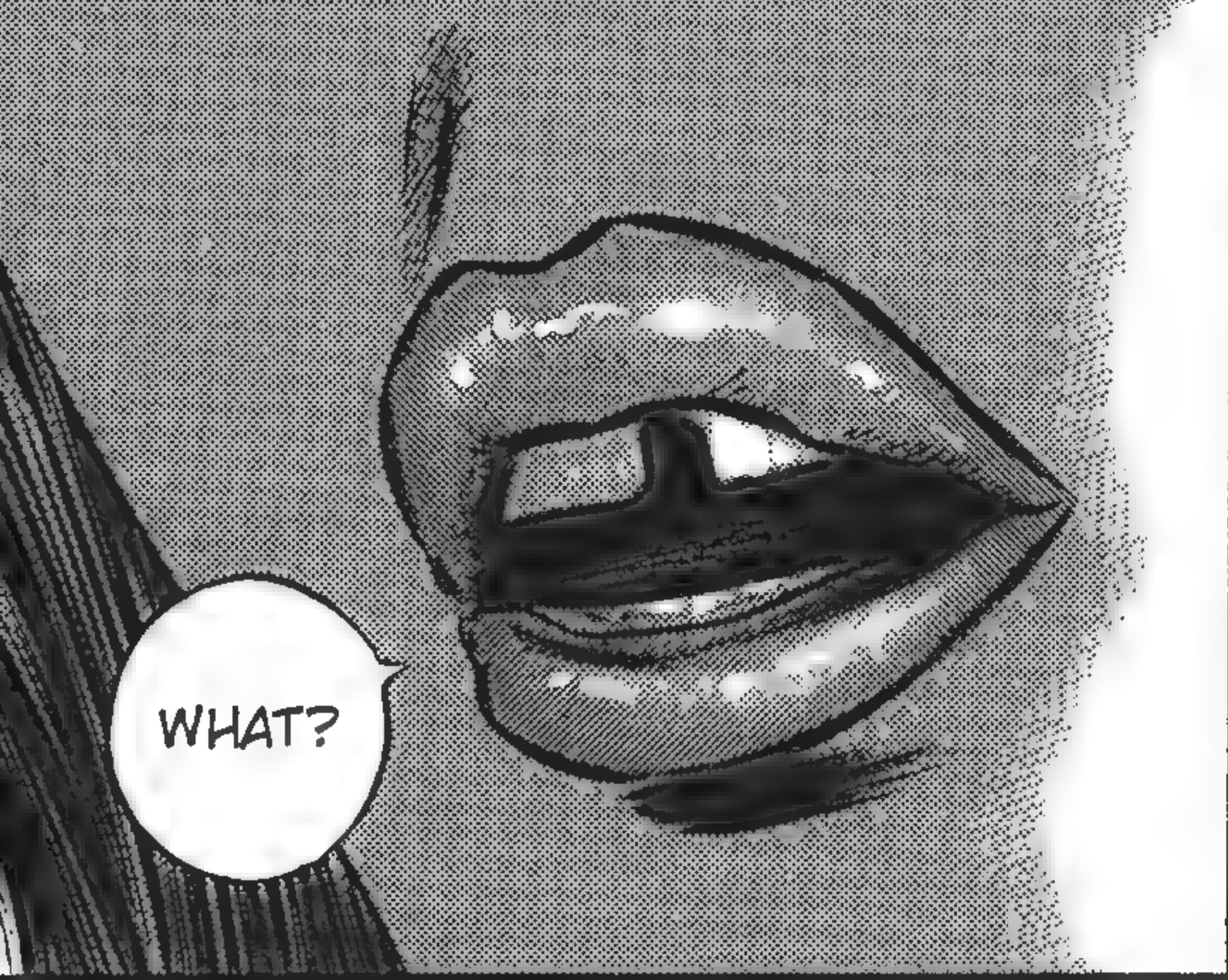




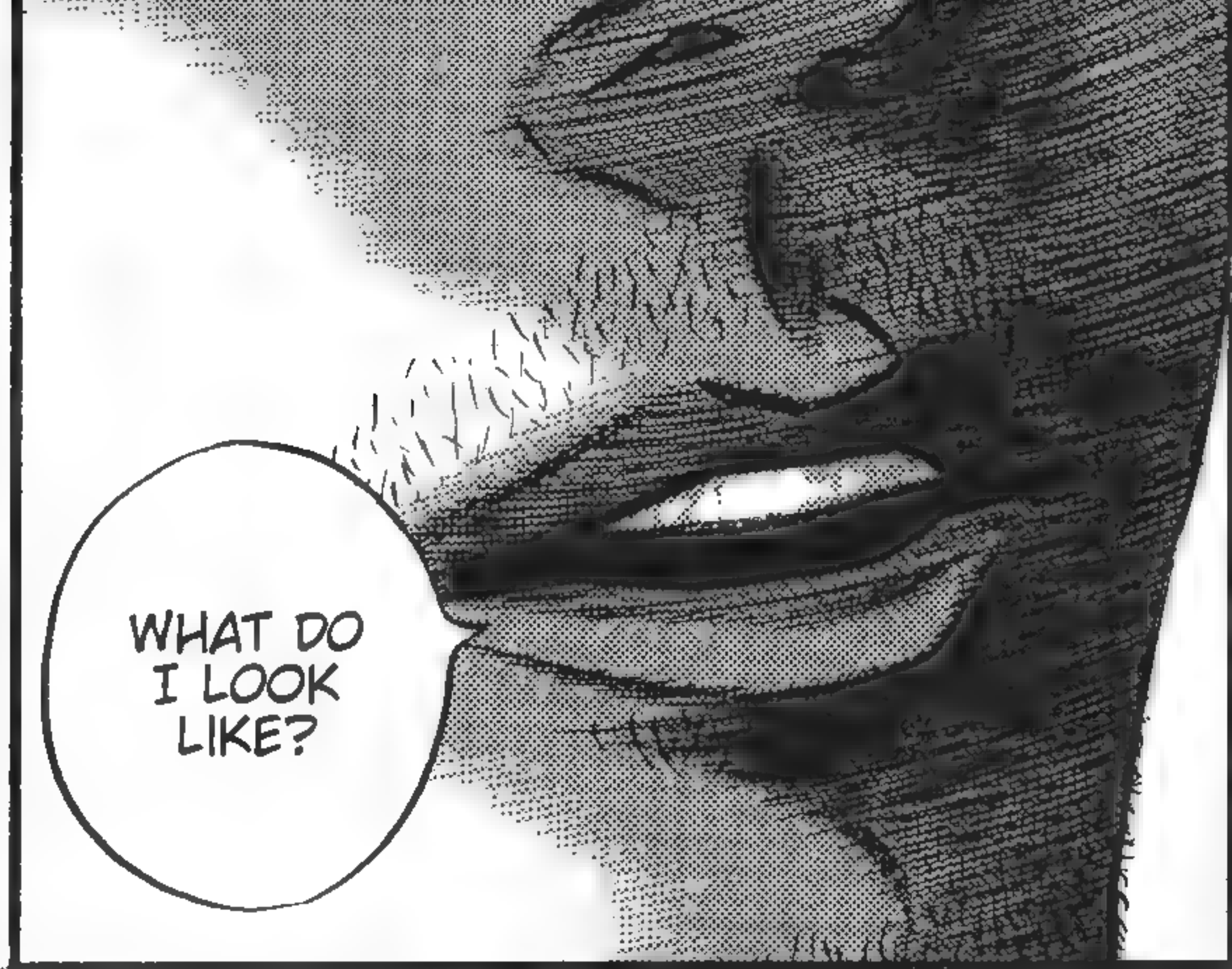








WHAT?



WHAT DO  
I LOOK  
LIKE?



WHAT DO I  
LOOK LIKE  
TO YOU?




BA-  
DMP

BA-  
DMP



A black and white manga-style close-up of a man's face. He has dark, wavy hair and a slight stubble. His eyes are looking slightly to the left. A speech bubble is in the top right corner.

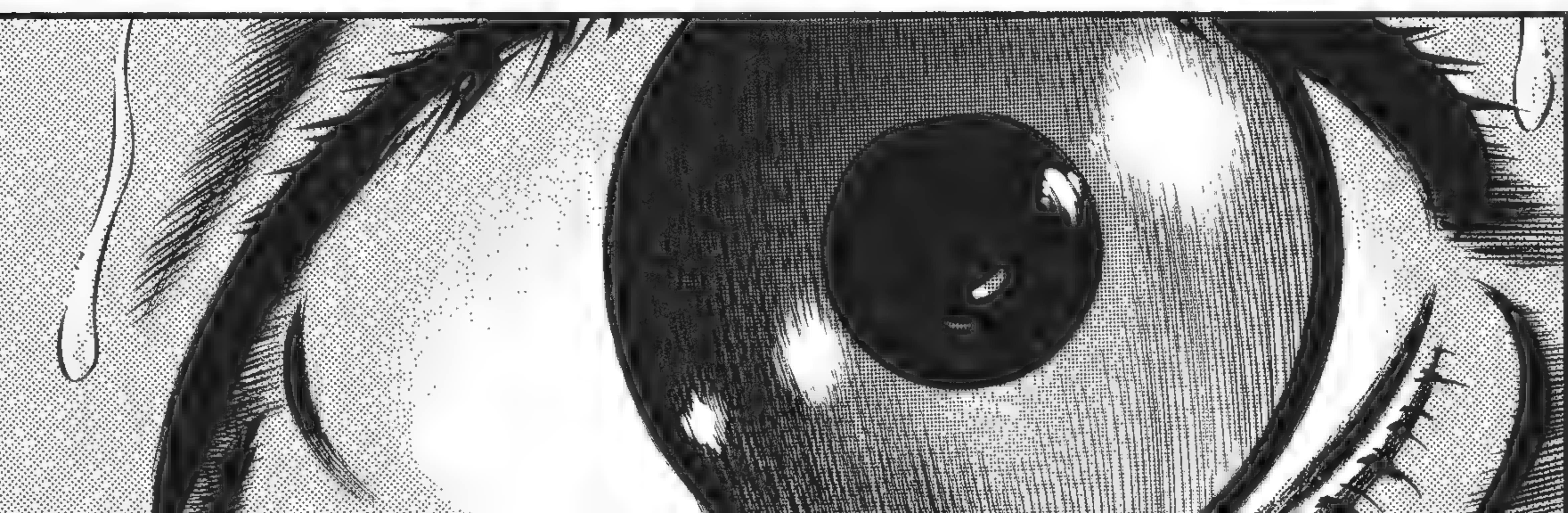
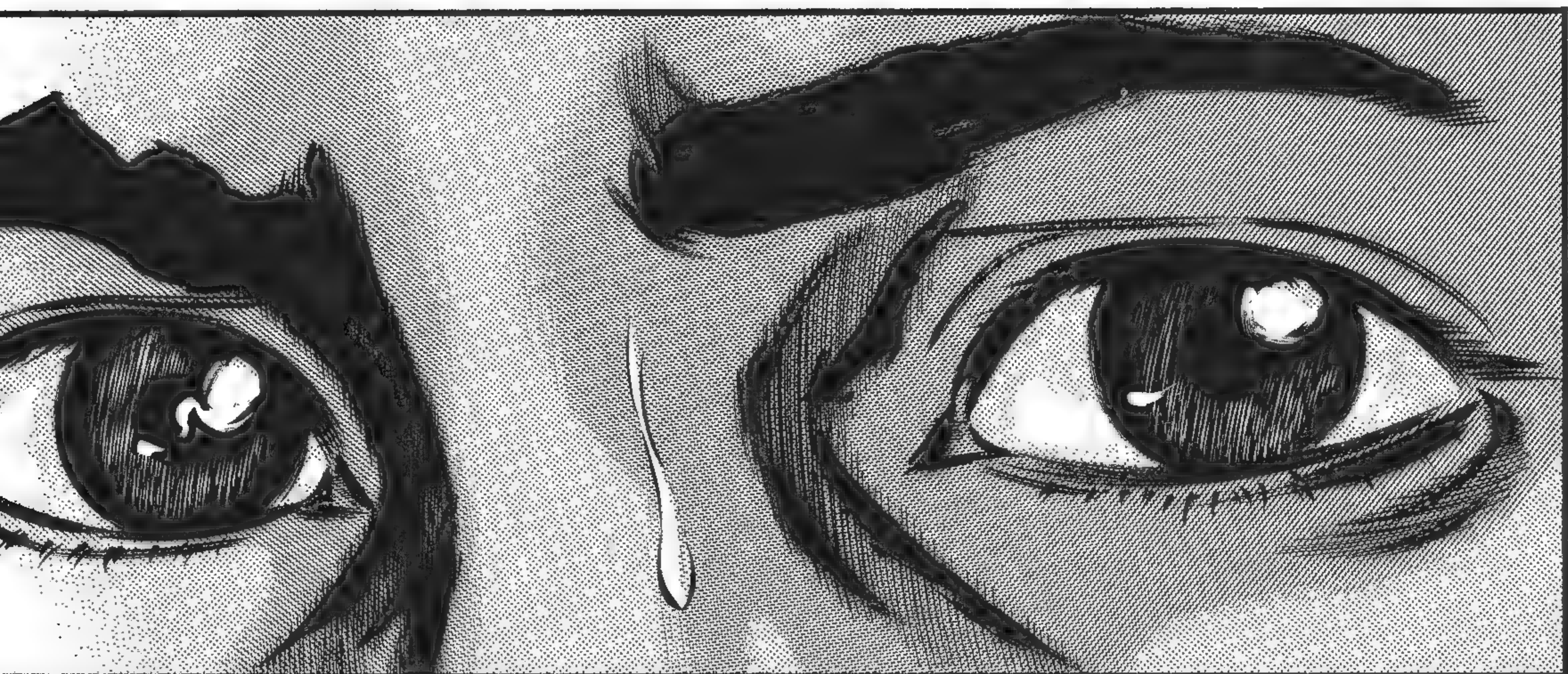
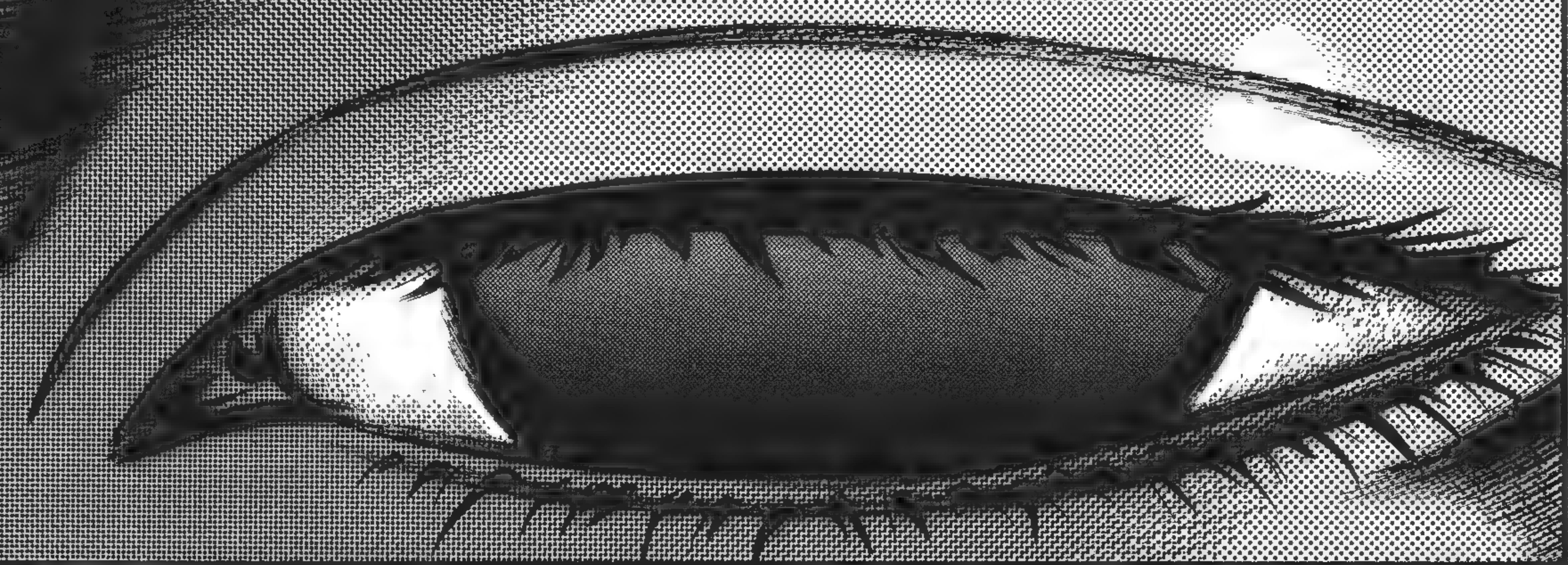
RIGHT  
NOW.

A black and white manga-style close-up of a man's face. He has dark, wavy hair and a slight stubble. His eyes are looking slightly to the left. A speech bubble is in the top right corner.

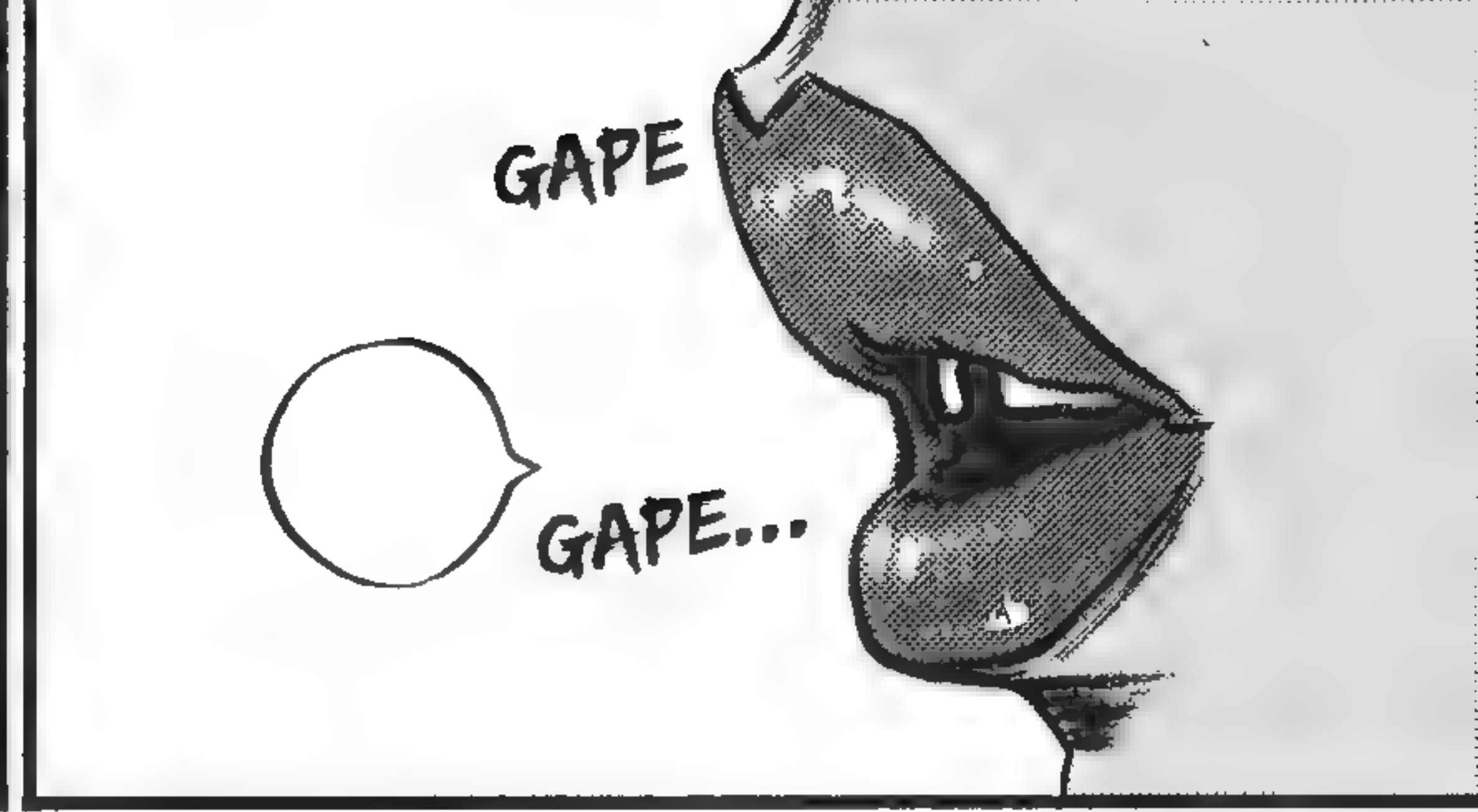
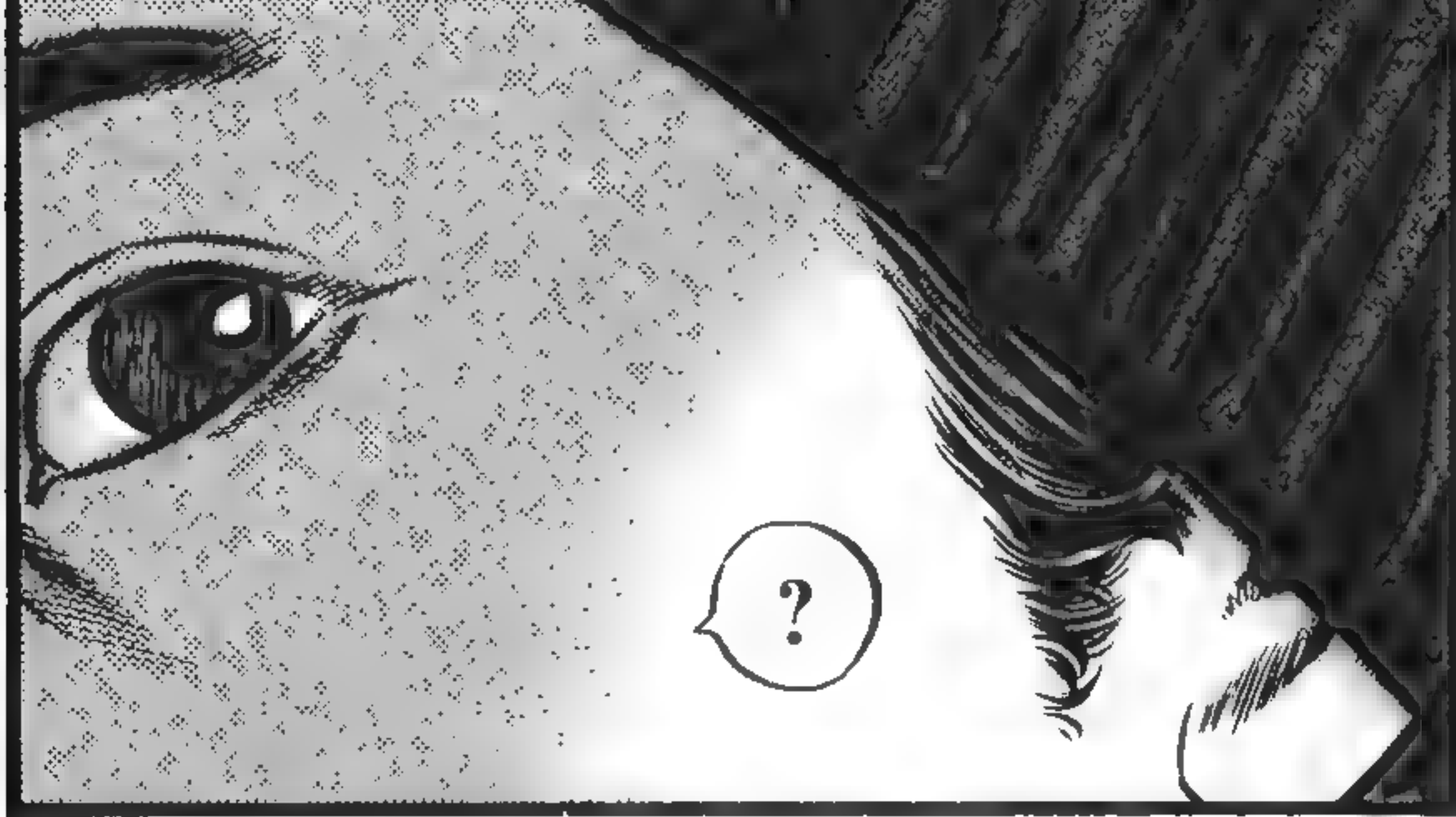
WHAT IS IN  
FRONT OF  
YOU?















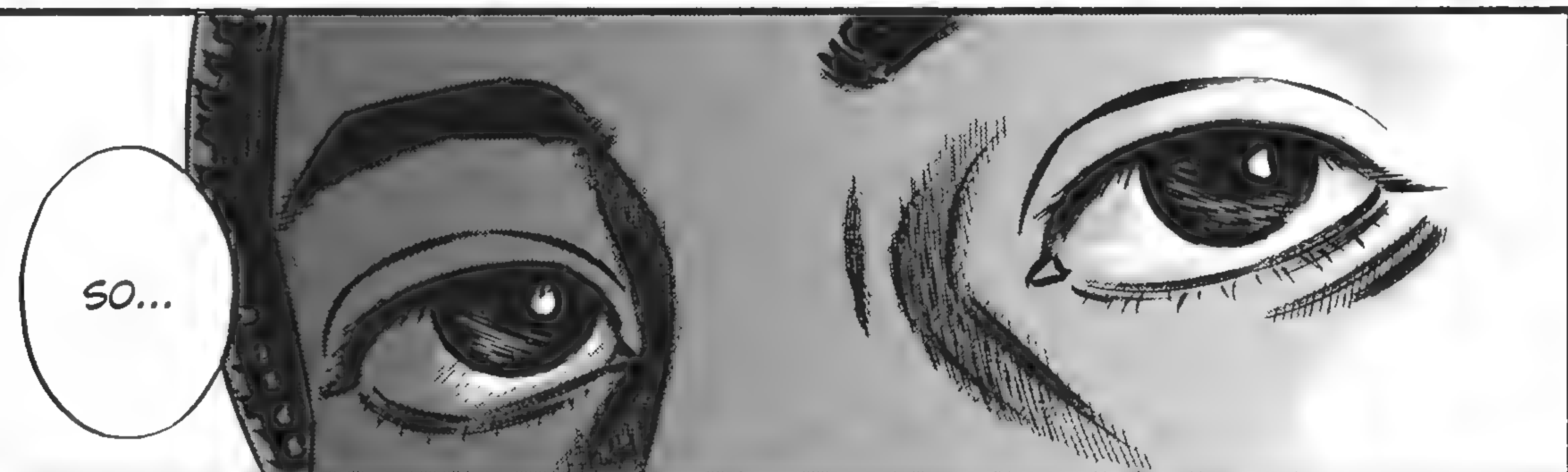
SMILE

IS THAT  
SO? GOOD  
FOR YOU.



COURSE  
NOT.

I'M JUST  
DOING  
SOME  
SOUL-  
SEARCH-  
ING.



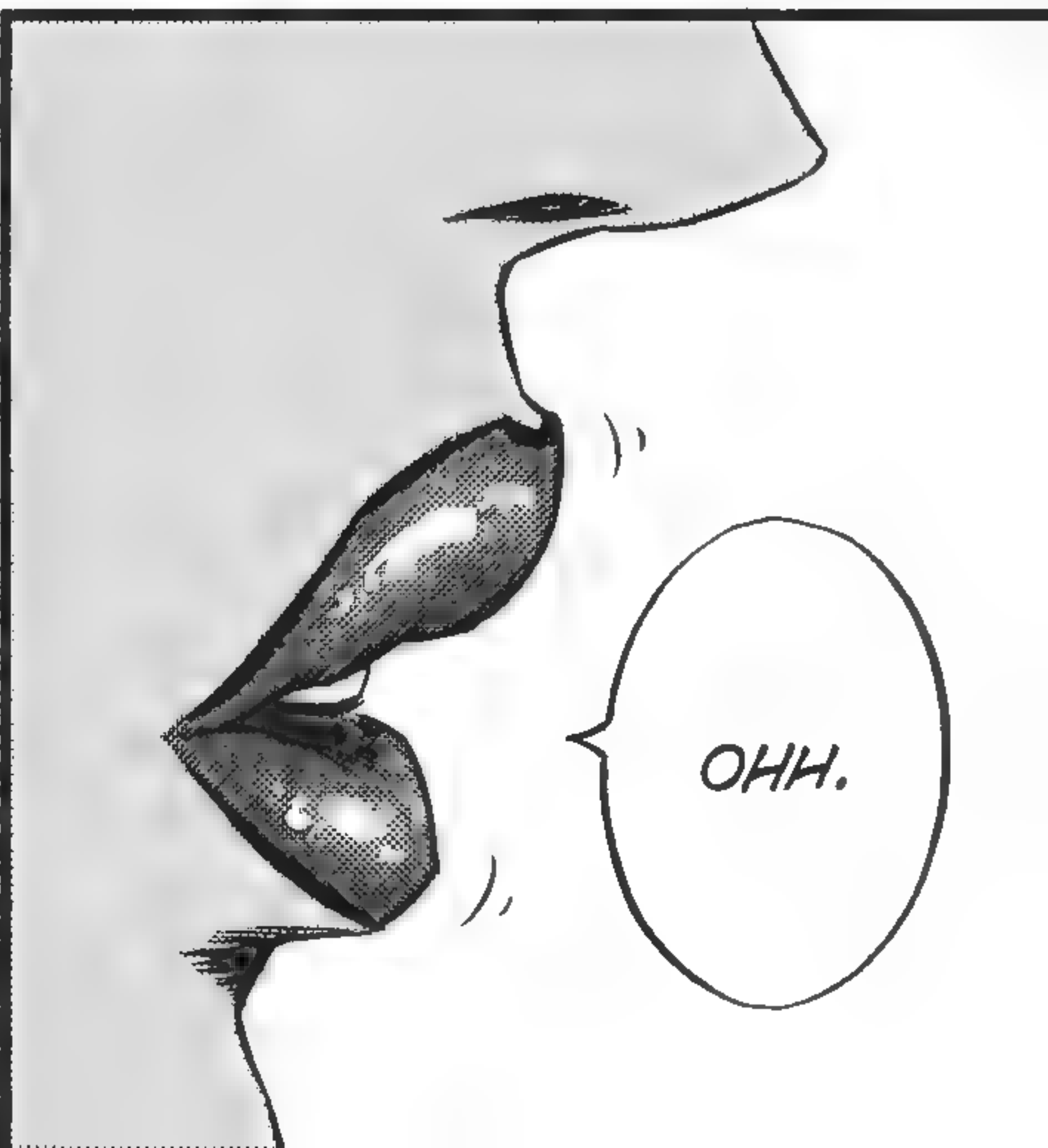
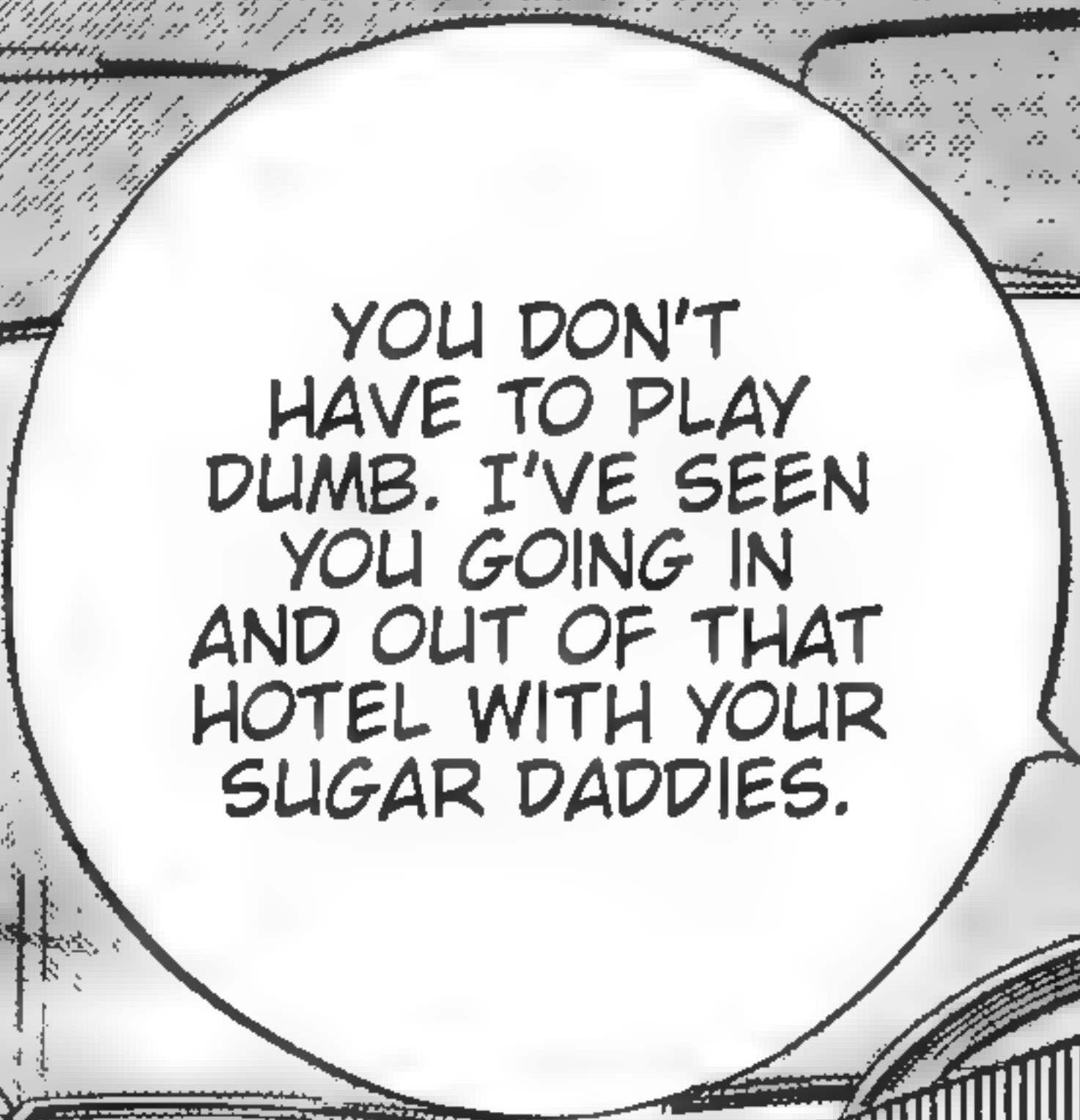
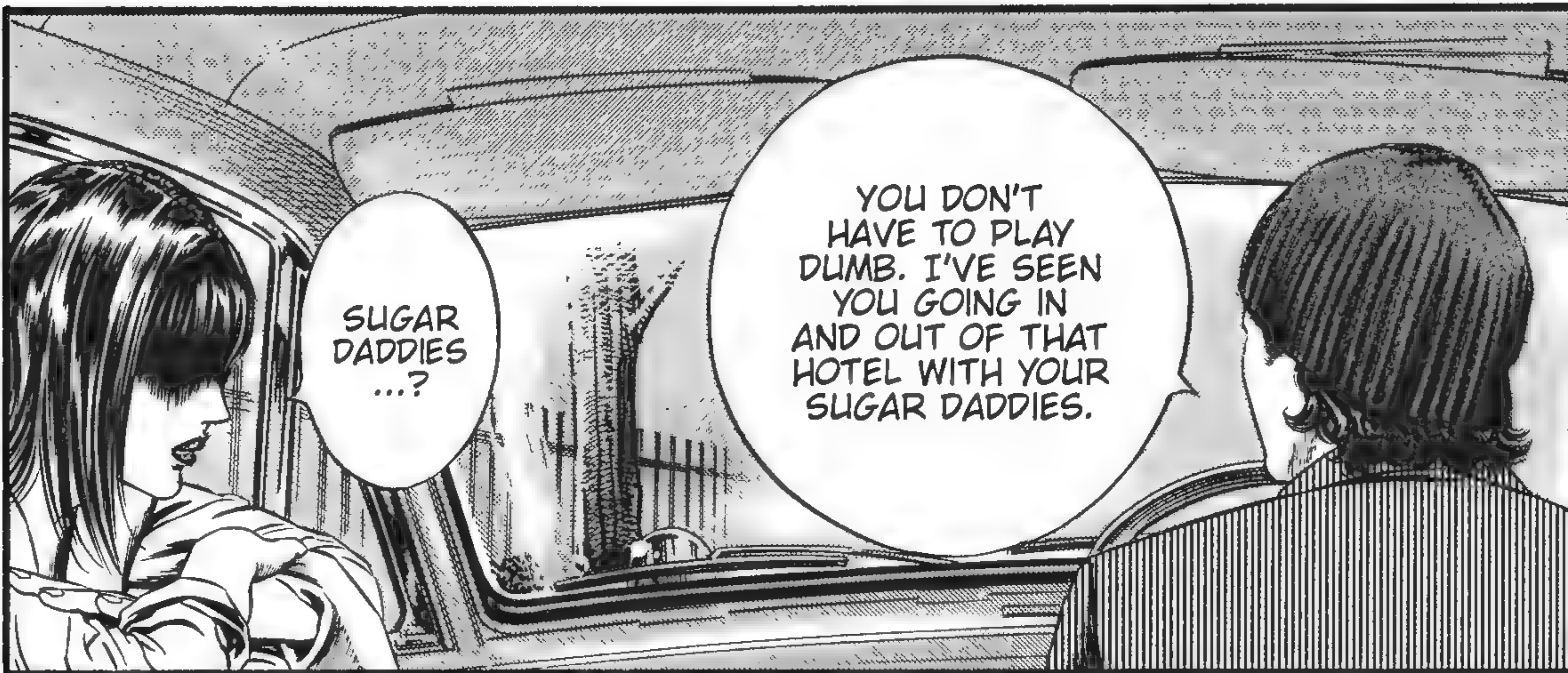
SO...



!

YOU'RE IN  
THE SUGAR  
GAME NOW,  
HUH?

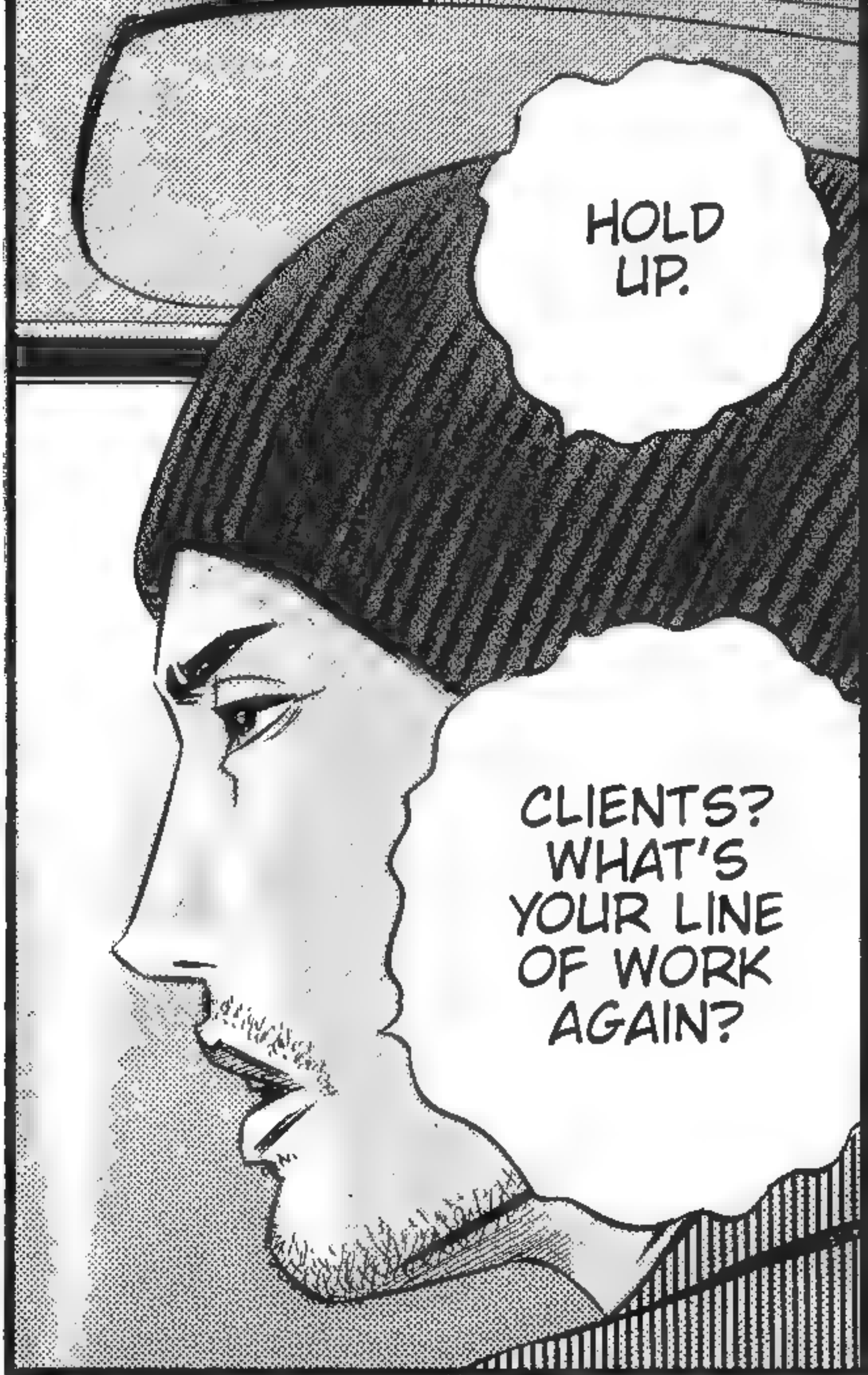








'CAUSE  
IF KISSING  
CLIENTS IN AN  
ELEVATOR IS  
PART OF  
THE JOB  
DESCRIPTION,  
WELL...



HOLD  
UP.

CLIENTS?  
WHAT'S  
YOUR LINE  
OF WORK  
AGAIN?



KISSING  
...?



ARE YOU  
CONFUSING  
ME WITH  
SOMEONE  
ELSE?

I HAVE NO  
IDEA WHAT  
YOU'RE  
TALKING  
ABOUT.



IT WASN'T  
CHASTE,  
EITHER.  
IS THAT  
YOUR JOB?  
FRENCHING?



TWITCH

TWITCH

AT LEAST PUT  
SOME EFFORT  
INTO SOUNDING  
BELIEVABLE.

UGH.  
COME  
ON.





MAYBE YOU  
SAW MY  
SISTER?

?



!!



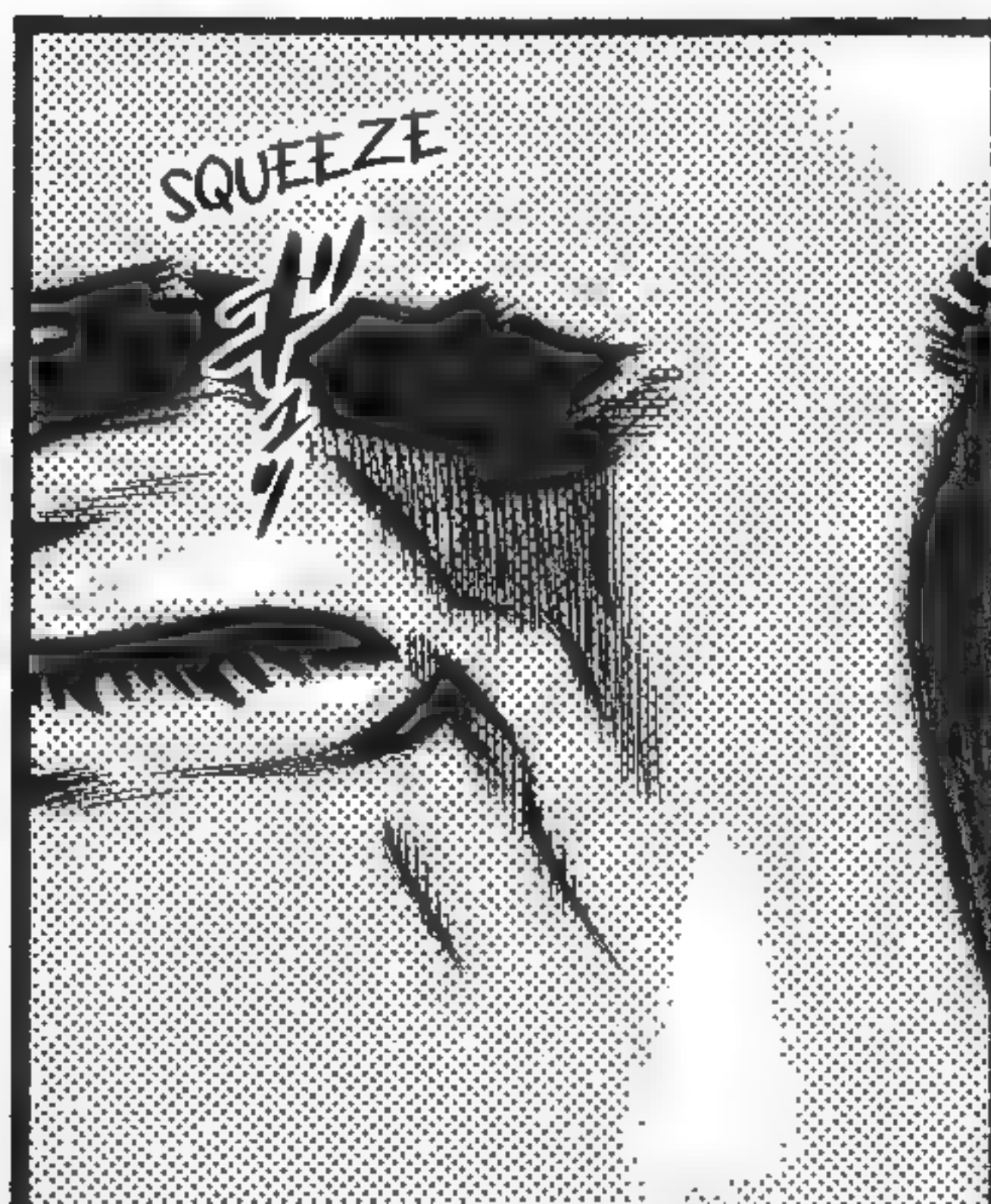
I DO HAVE  
A TWIN,  
AFTER  
ALL.



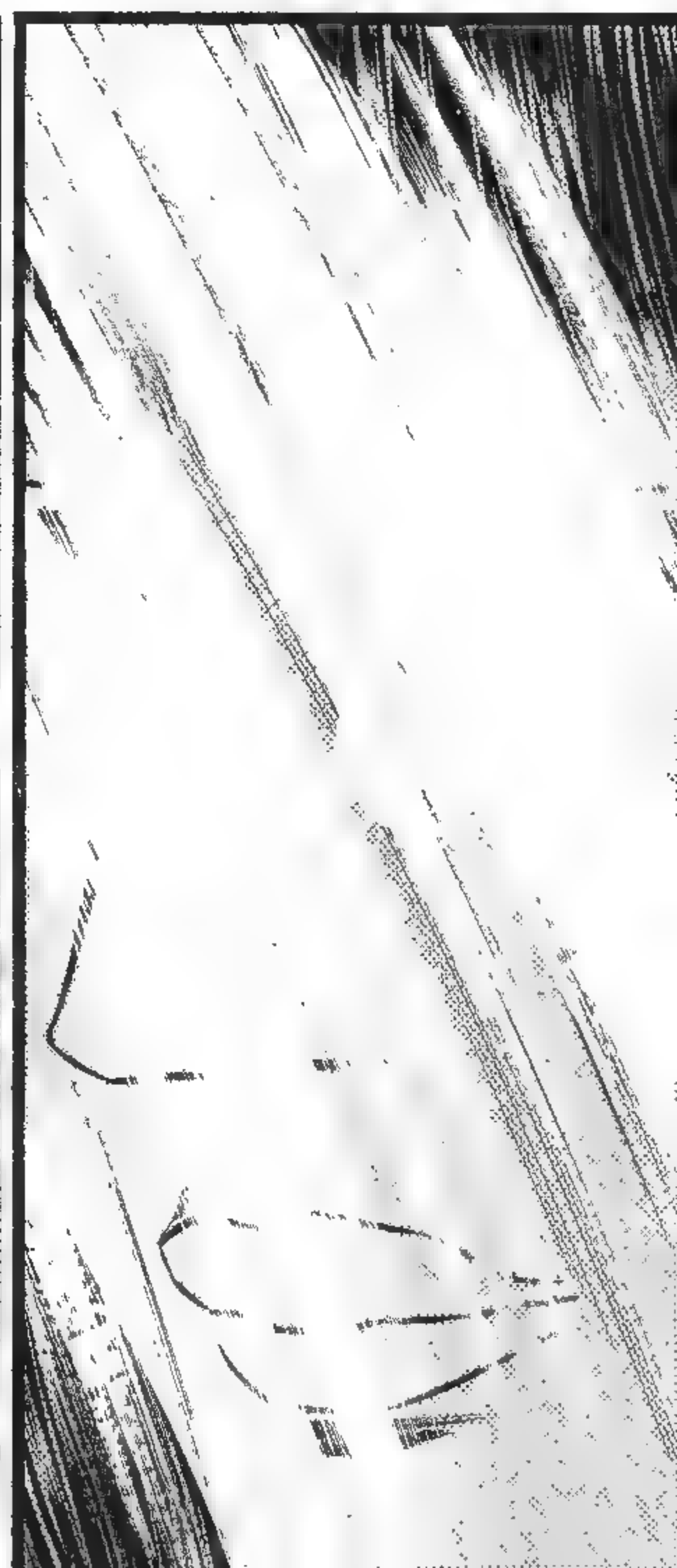
STARE

Y...

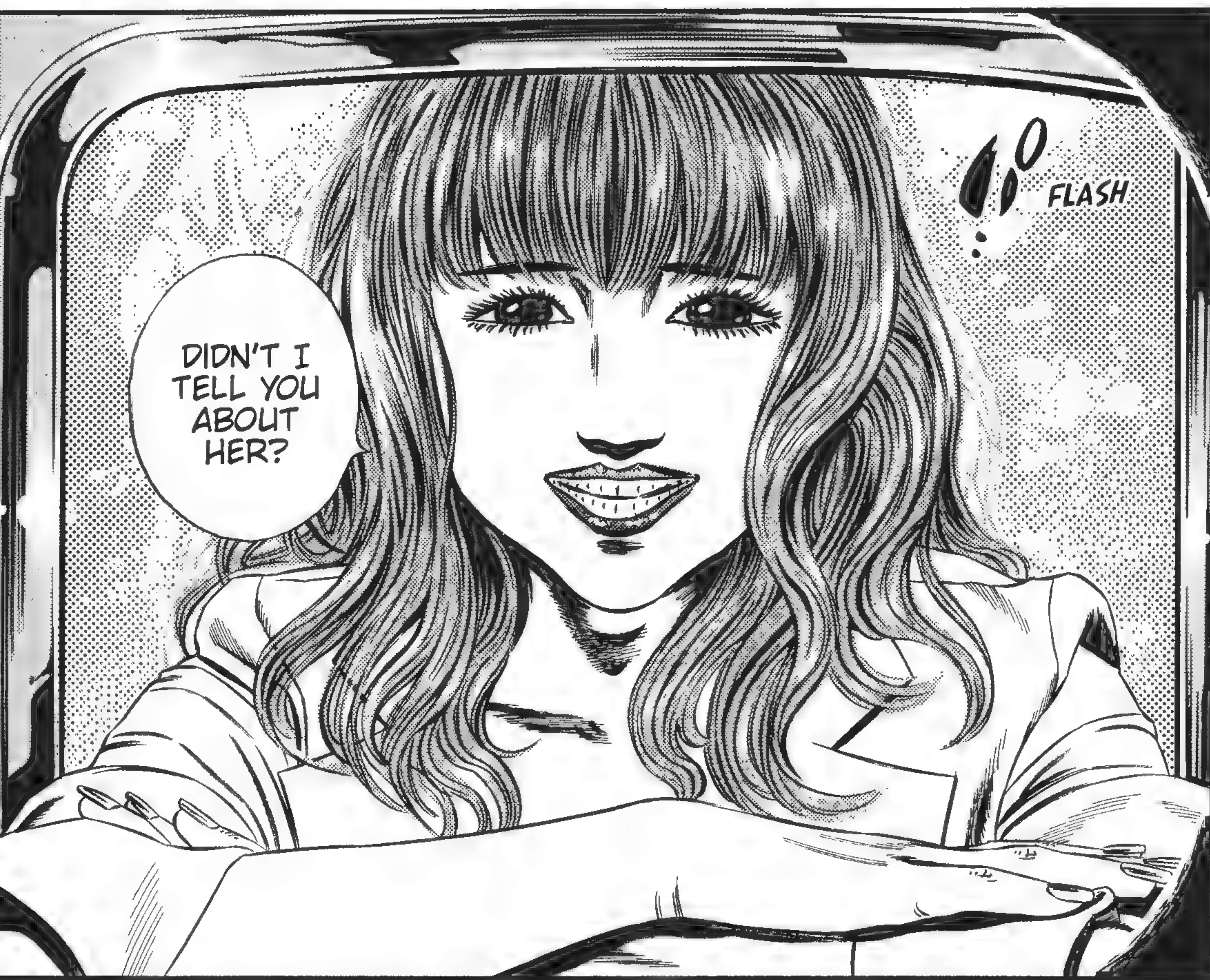
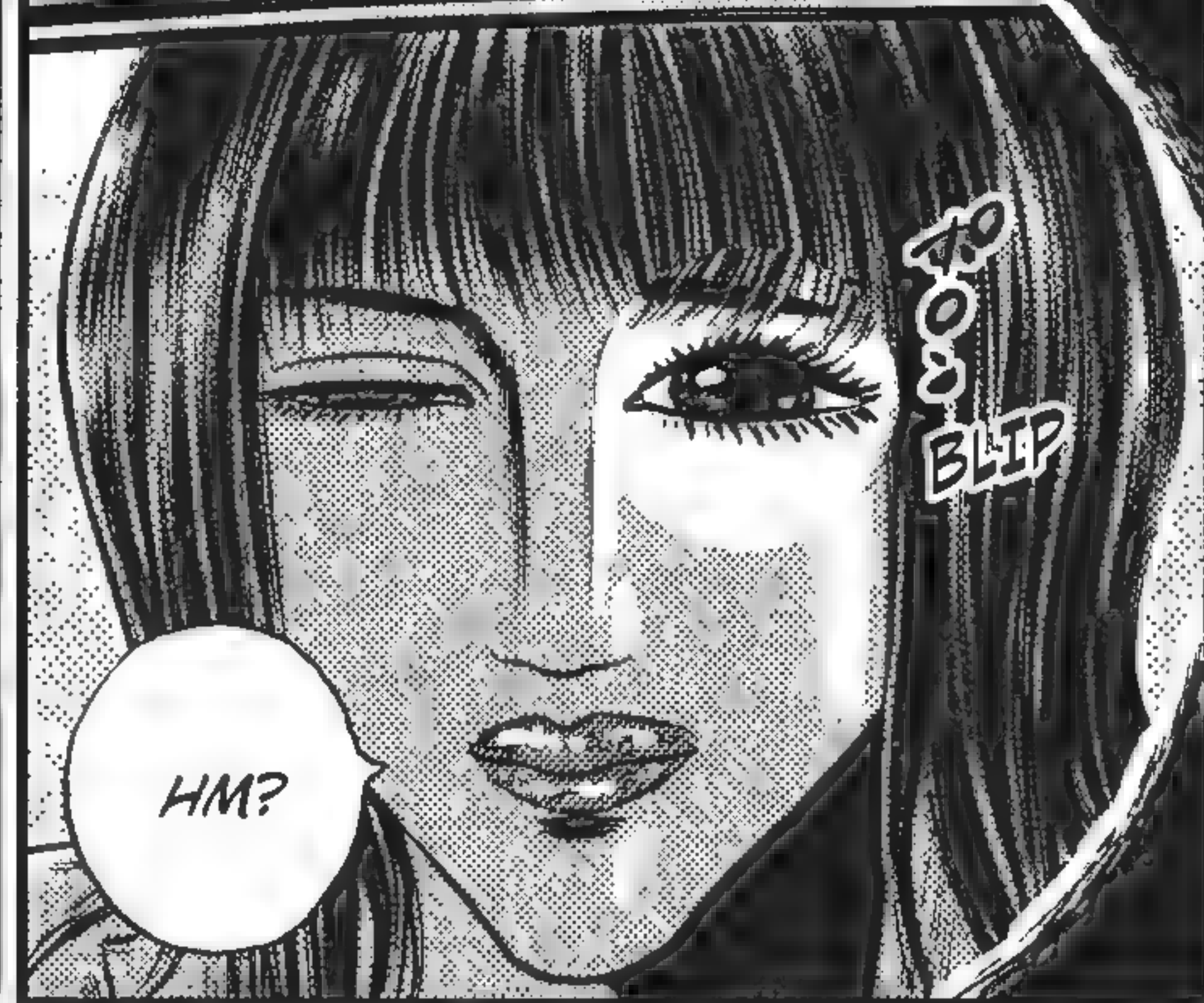
YOU  
CAN'T BE  
SERIOUS.



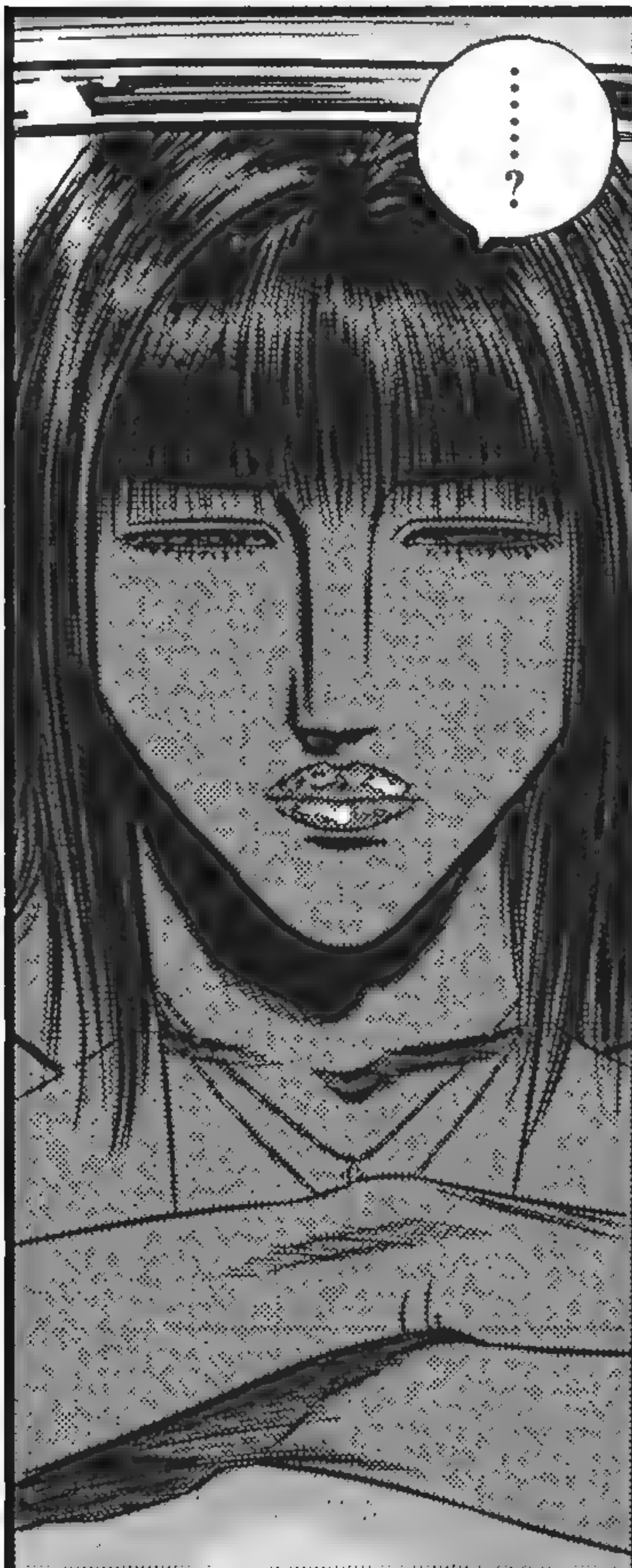
SQUEEZE















THIS  
"SISTER"  
OF  
YOURS...



FINE.  
TELL  
ME...



HAS  
SHE HAD  
PLASTIC  
SURGERY  
TOO?



PLASTIC  
SURGERY.

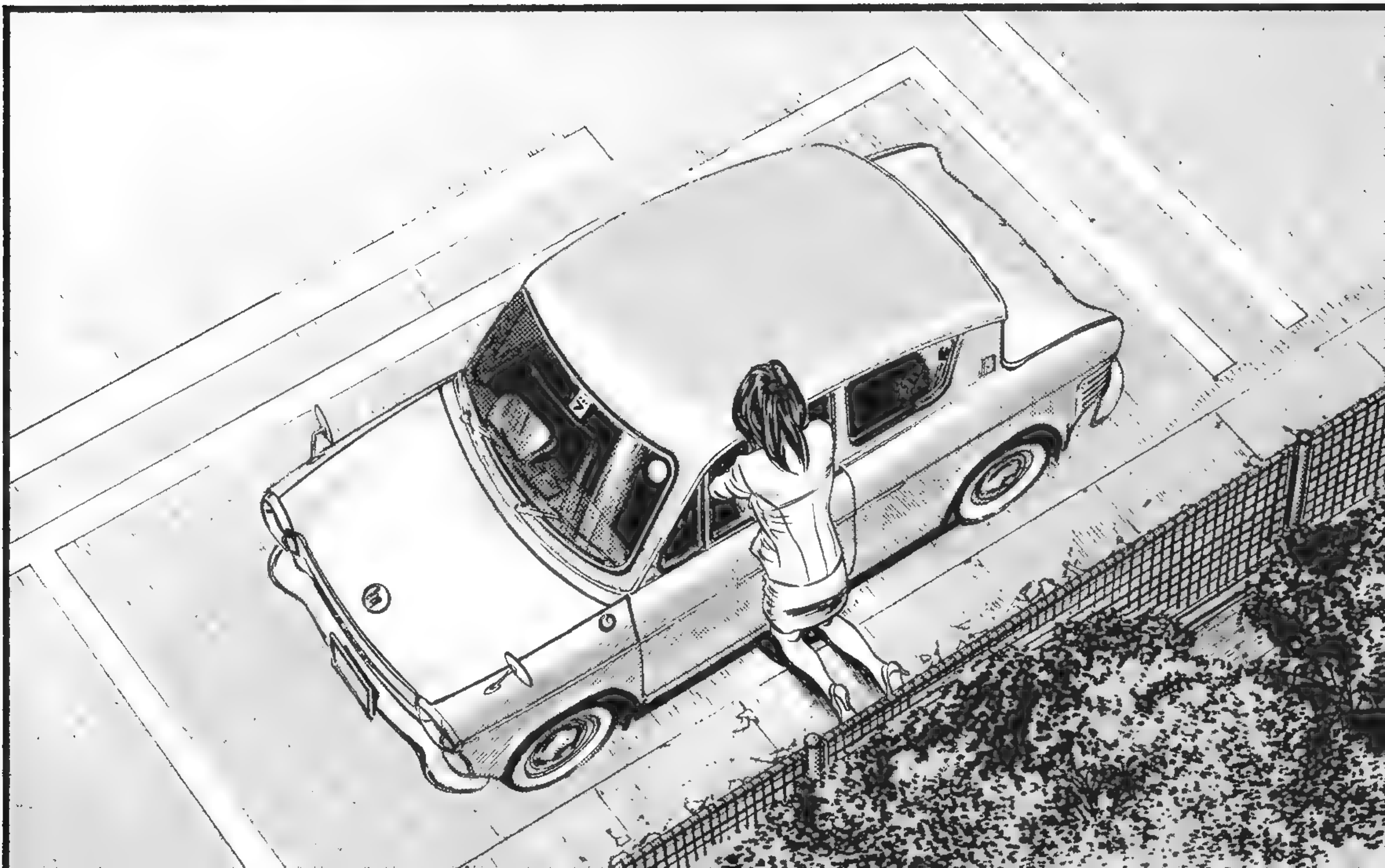
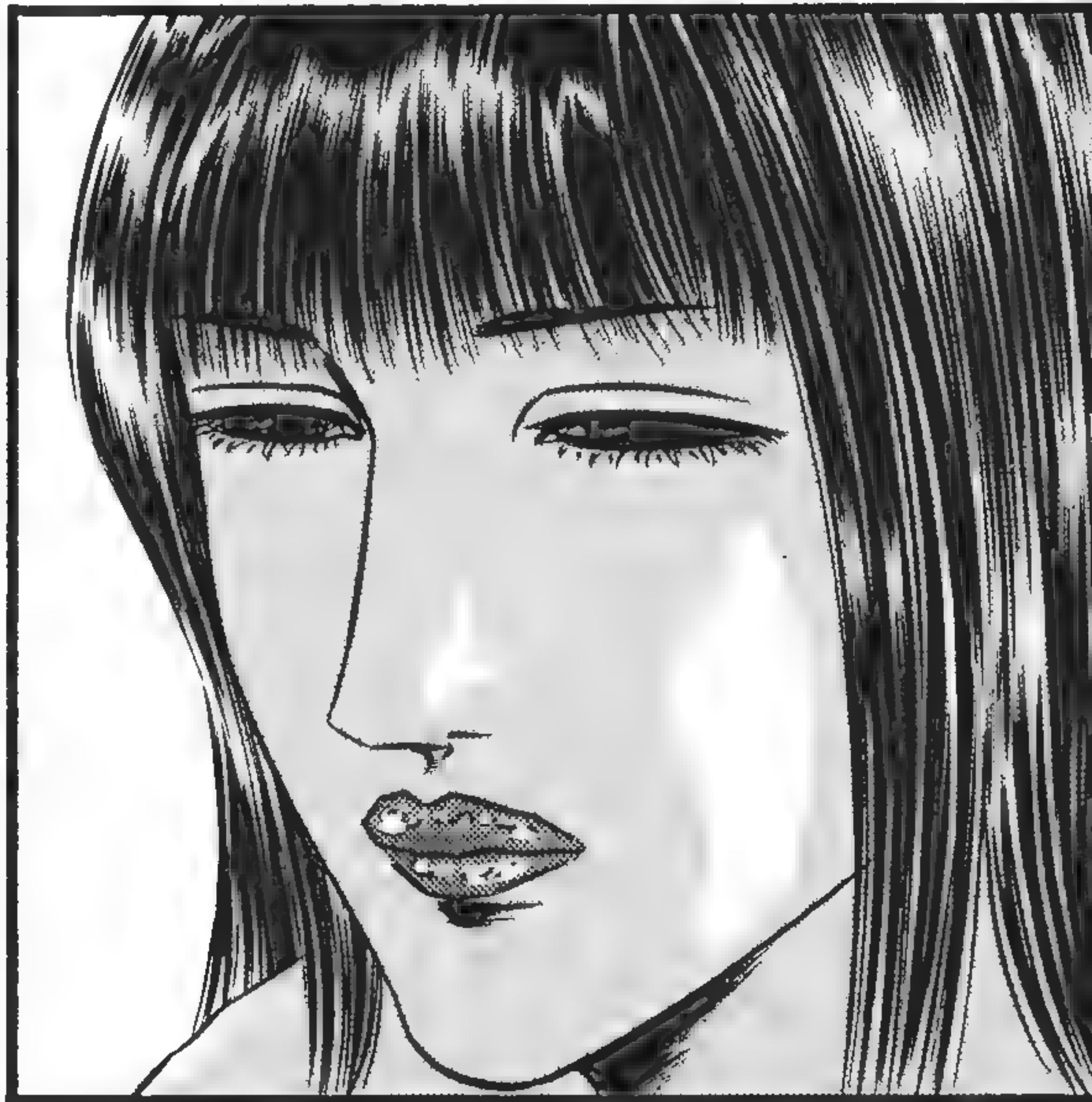
I KNOW  
YOU'VE  
HEARD  
OF IT.



WHATEVER  
DO YOU  
MEAN?

PLASTIC  
SURGERY?









I'M GOING  
BACK TO  
WORK.



WELL...



HUH?

ONE LAST  
THING. DO  
YOU STILL  
DRAW?



...



YOU USED  
TO DRAW.  
REMEMBER?





IN FACT...  
I'M REALLY  
QUITE GOOD  
AT IT.

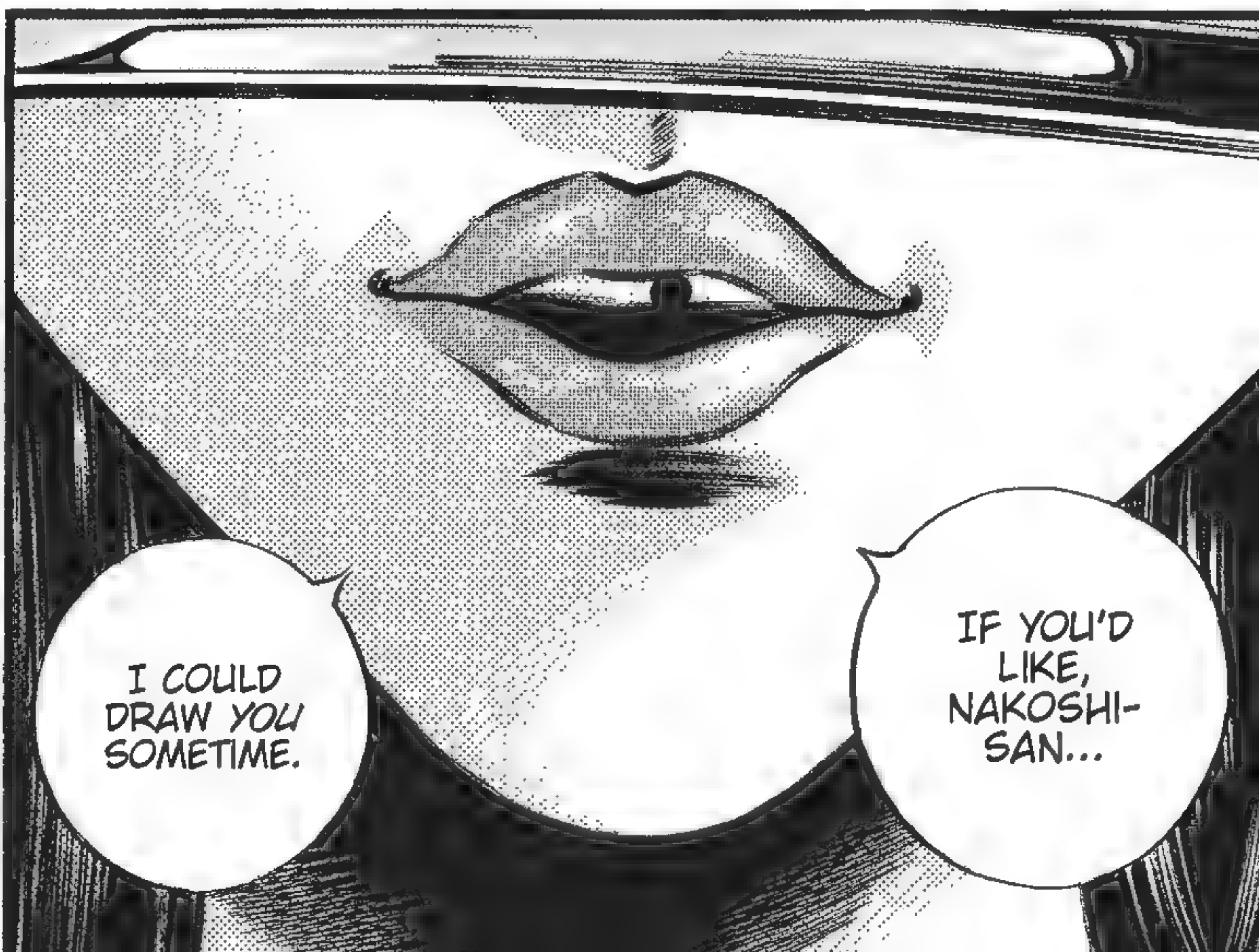
WHY, YES,  
I STILL DO.



OH, ALL SORTS  
OF THINGS.  
LANDSCAPES,  
PORTRAITURE,  
OIL PAINTINGS,  
CHARCOAL...



WHAT  
DO YOU  
DRAW?



I COULD  
DRAW YOU  
SOMETIME.

IF YOU'D  
LIKE,  
NAKOSHI-  
SAN...



HMPH.

I'LL  
PASS,  
THANKS.

ARE YOU  
TAKING  
THOSE  
MEDS?

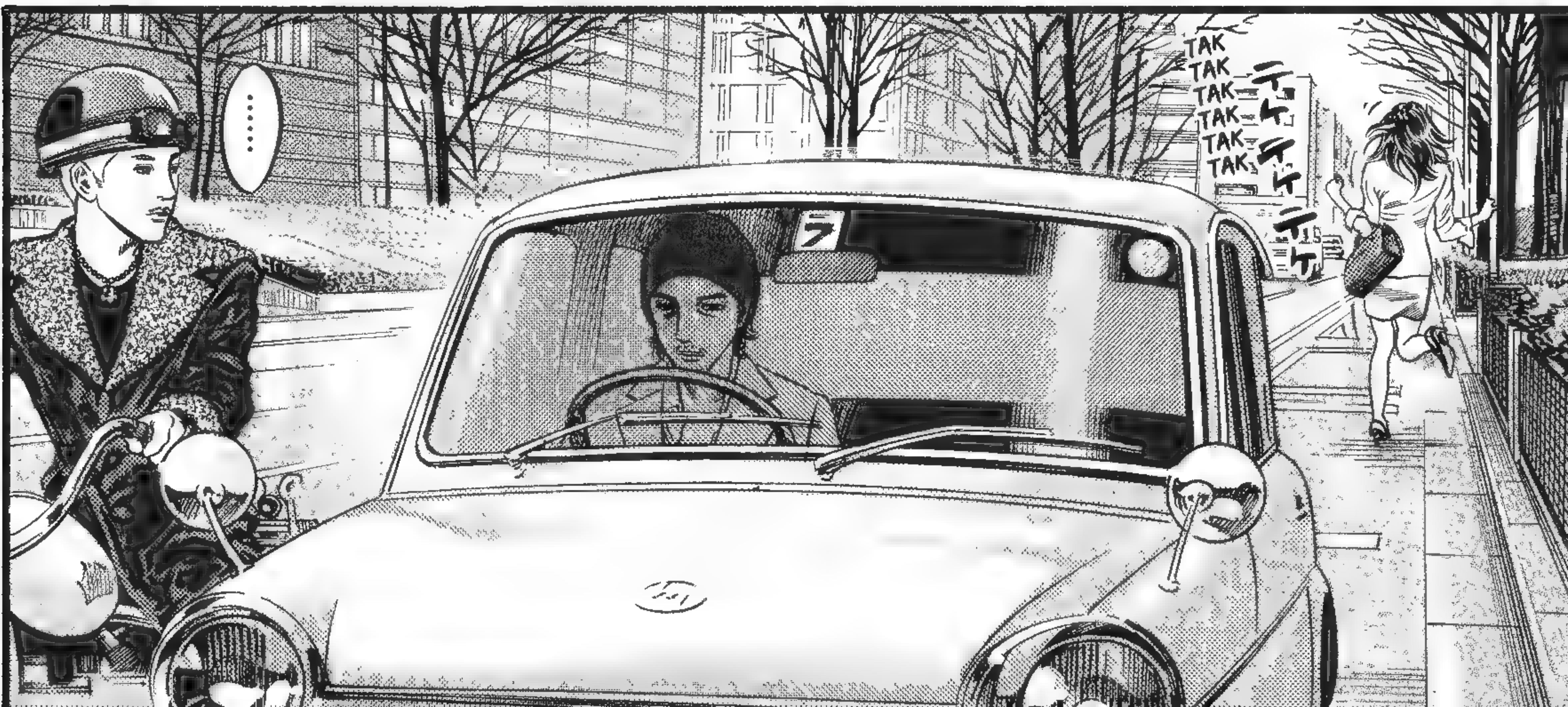
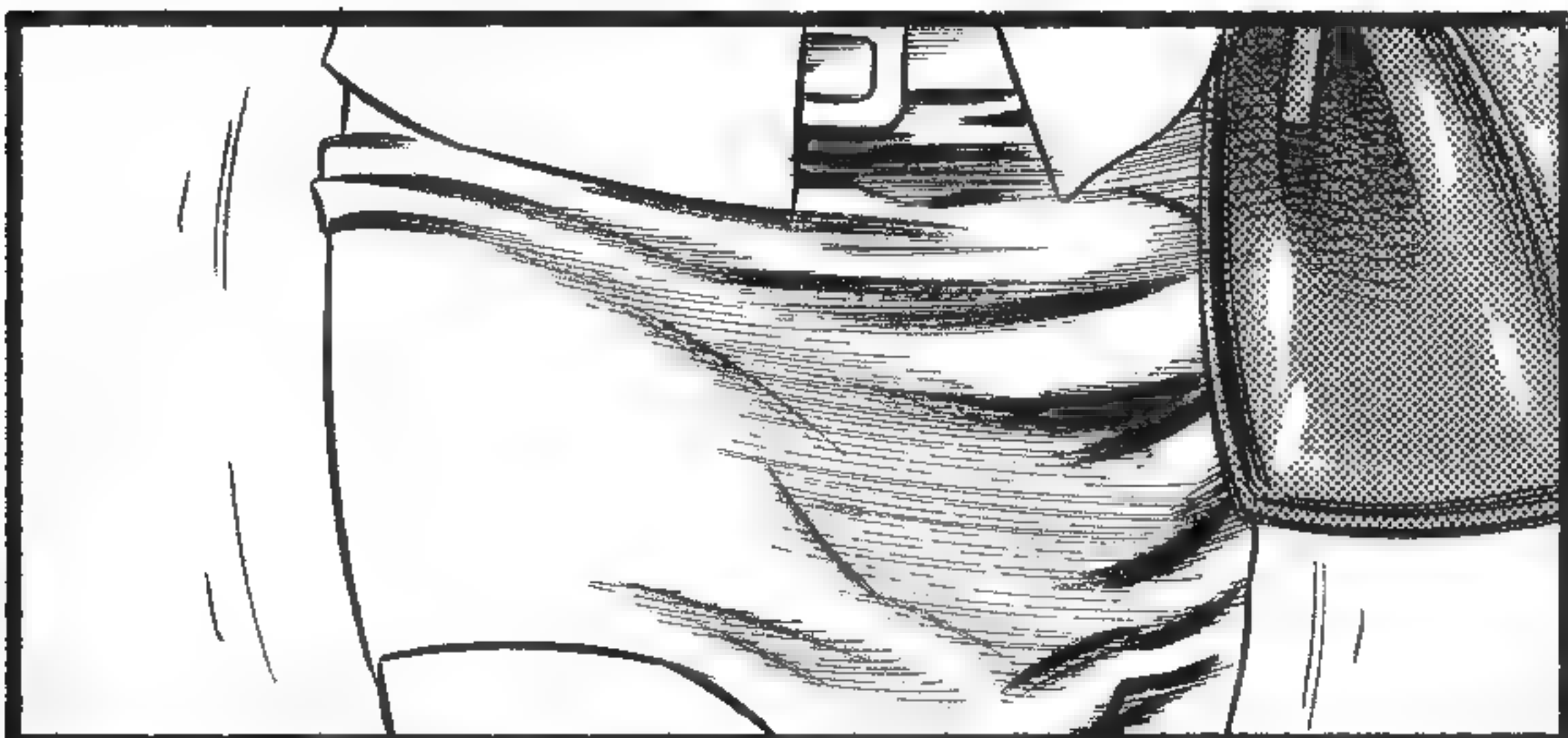
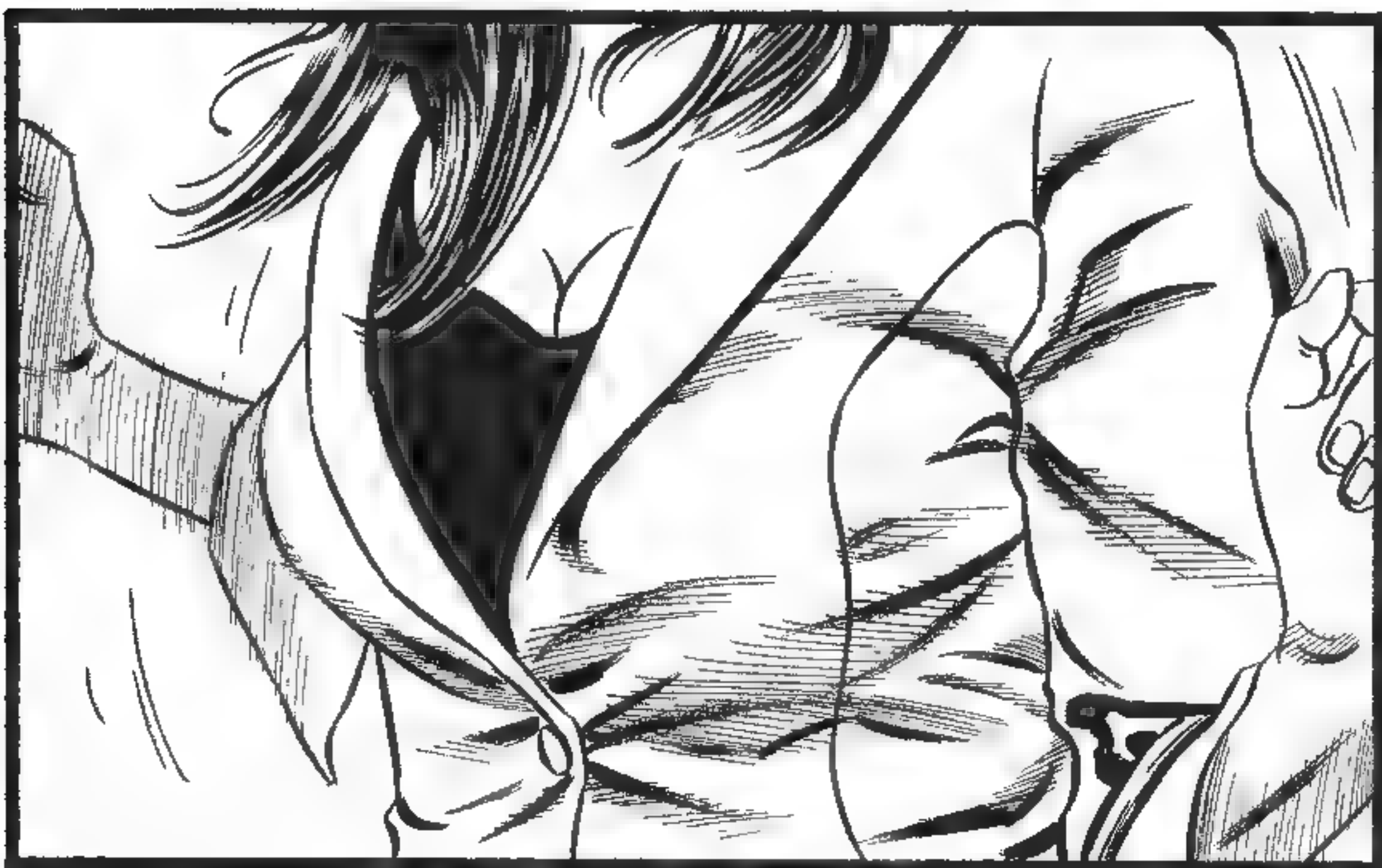
HEY,  
NAKOSHI-  
SAN!

SKRT

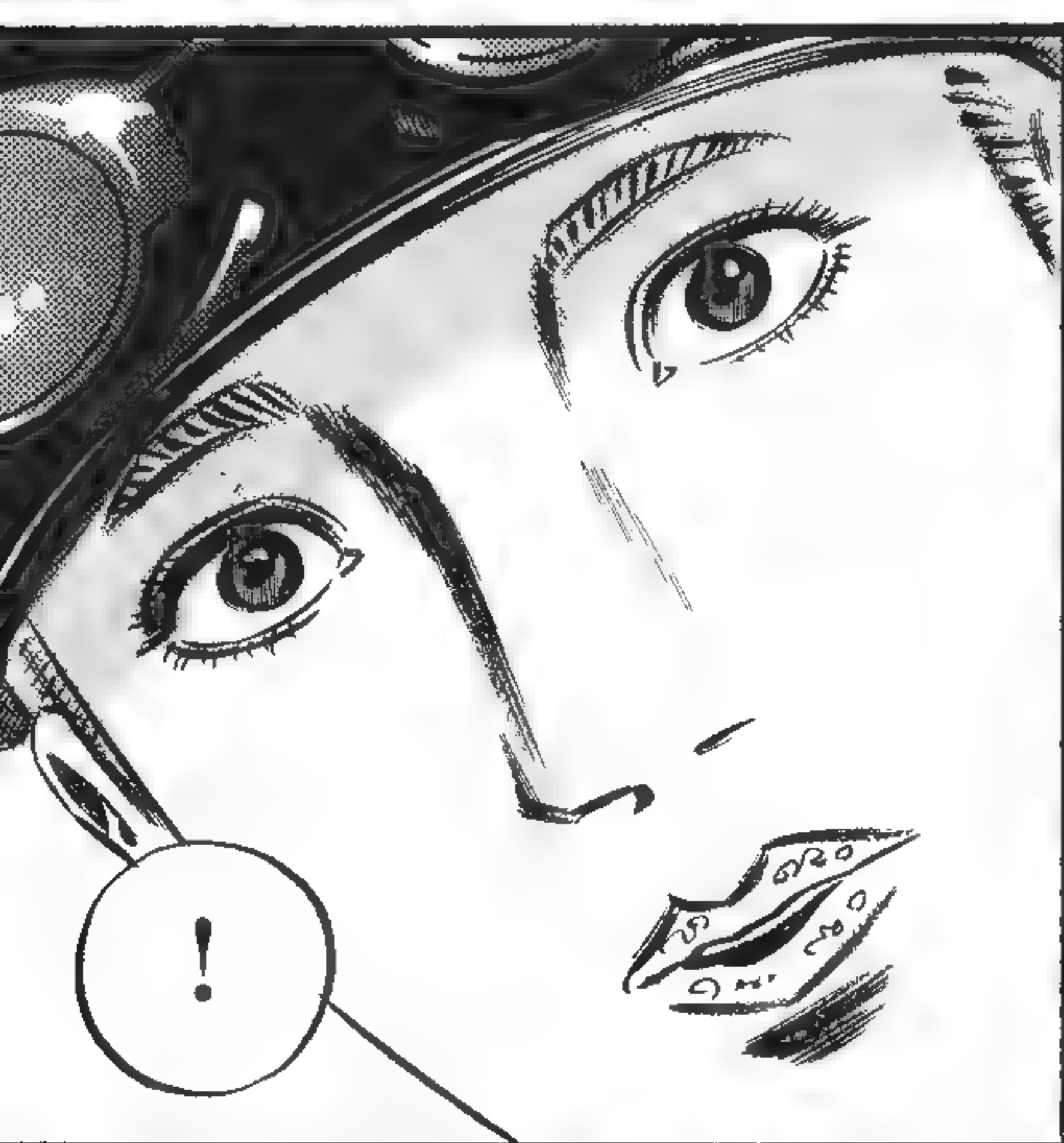
V  
R  
O  
O  
N

!

















AND,  
THERE'S NO  
POSSIBLE WAY  
YOU COULD EAT  
ALL THIS BY  
YOURSELF!

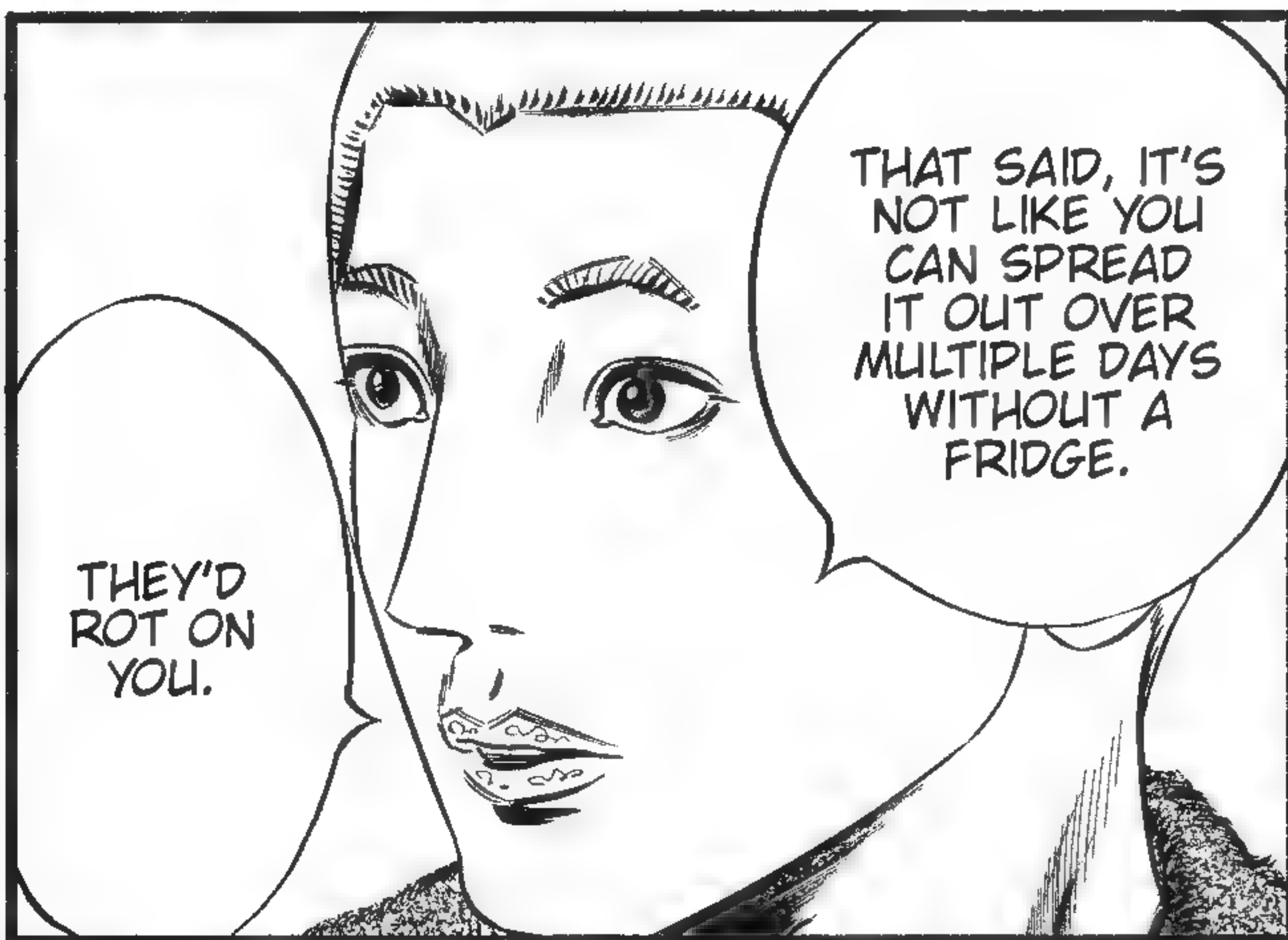
GUESS  
NOT, NO.



AND?



THANKS  
FOR THE  
EXPOSITION,  
CAPTAIN  
OBVIOUS.



THEY'D  
ROT ON  
YOU.

THAT SAID, IT'S  
NOT LIKE YOU  
CAN SPREAD  
IT OUT OVER  
MULTIPLE DAYS  
WITHOUT A  
FRIDGE.



YOU WERE  
THE SAME  
WAY NOT  
TOO LONG  
AGO, HUH?



!



SO FIXATED  
ON SHOWY  
NUMBERS THAT  
SHE MISSES  
THE FOREST  
FOR THE  
TREES...

?









COULD  
ONLY  
TELL THE  
TRUTH.

RIGHT?

AND...

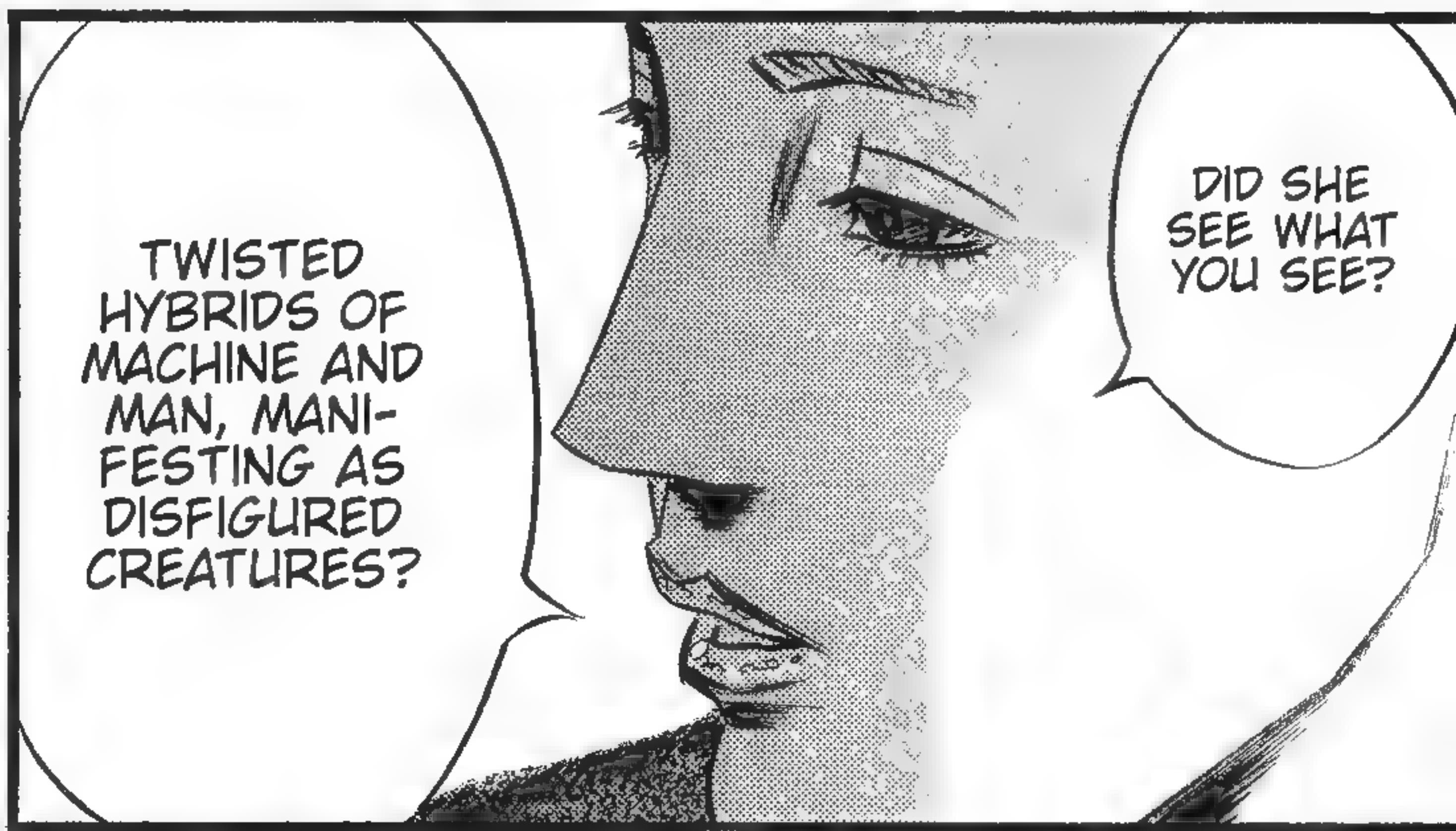
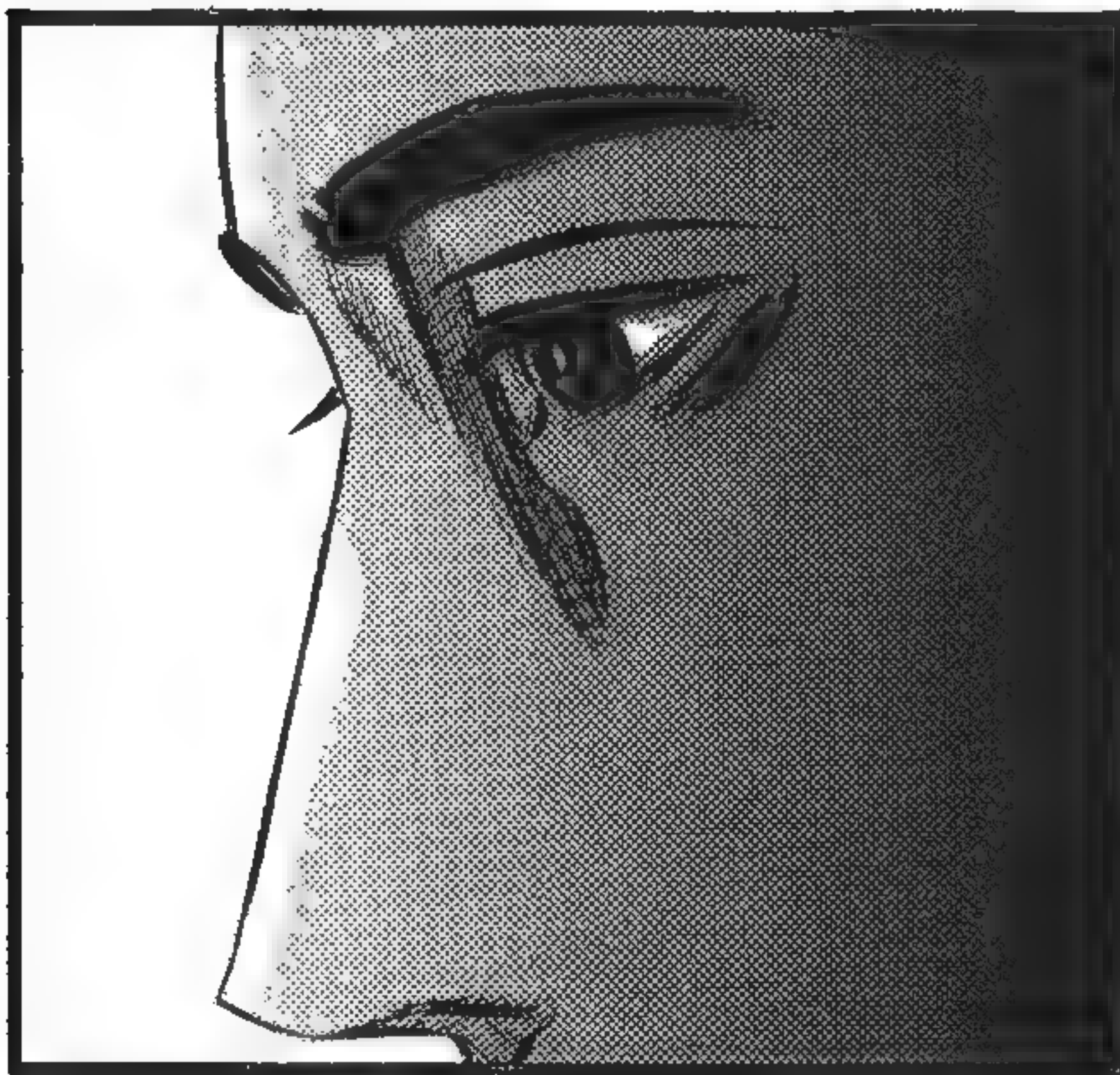


BY THE  
WAY...WHEN YOU  
SAY SHE "SAW  
HOMUNCULI," WHAT  
DO YOU MEAN,  
SPECIFICALLY?  
HOW DID SHE  
SEE THEM?





WHAT SORT  
OF FORM  
DID OTHERS'  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
DISTORTIONS  
TAKE FOR  
HER?



TWISTED  
HYBRIDS OF  
MACHINE AND  
MAN, MANI-  
FESTING AS  
DISFIGURED  
CREATURES?

DID SHE  
SEE WHAT  
YOU SEE?



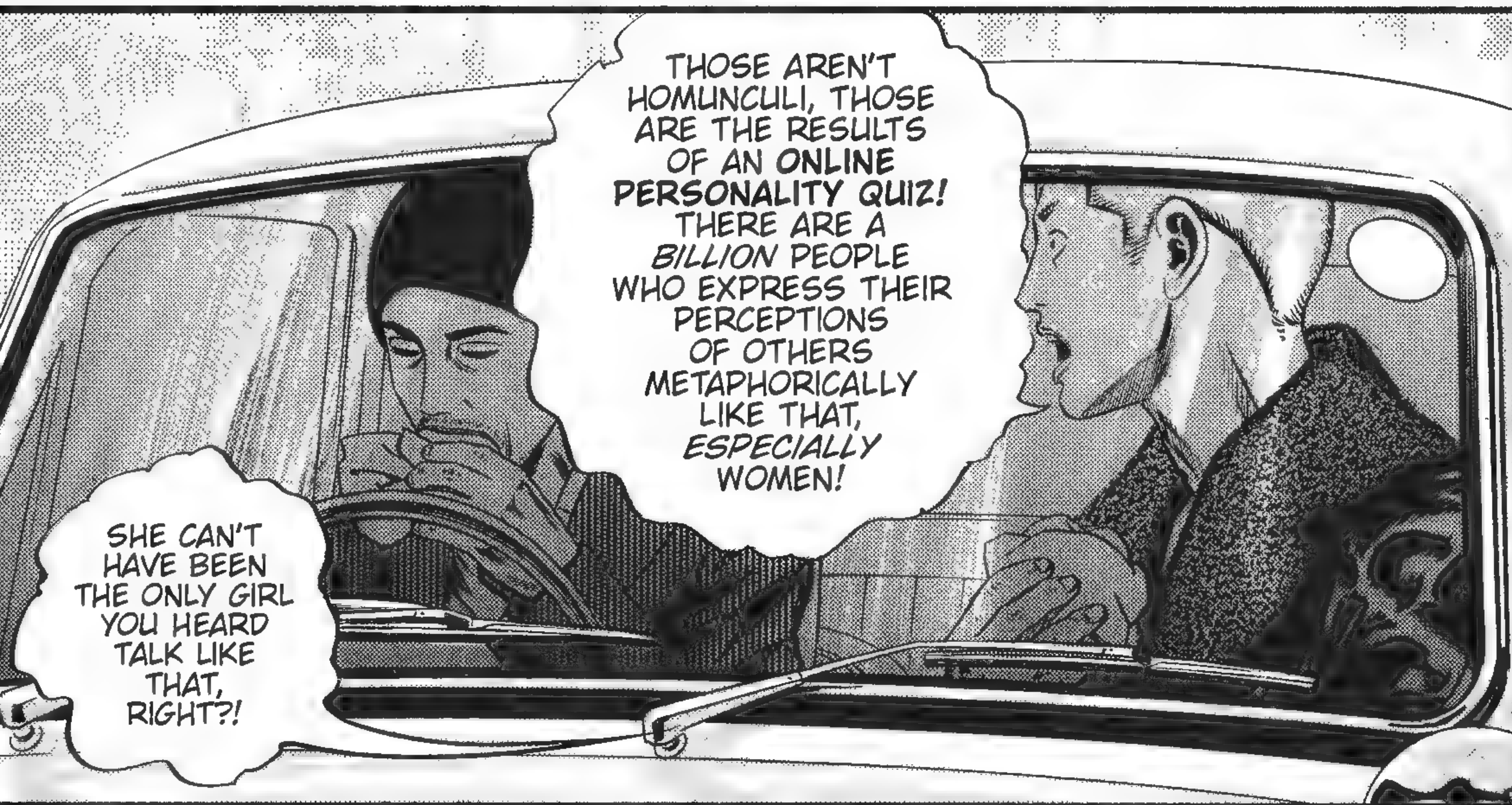
SHE SAW  
LIFE.



!

NO. SHE WAS  
DIFFERENT.  
WHERE I  
SEE COLD  
MACHINERY...









YOUR  
DRAWINGS  
DO SUCK.

...

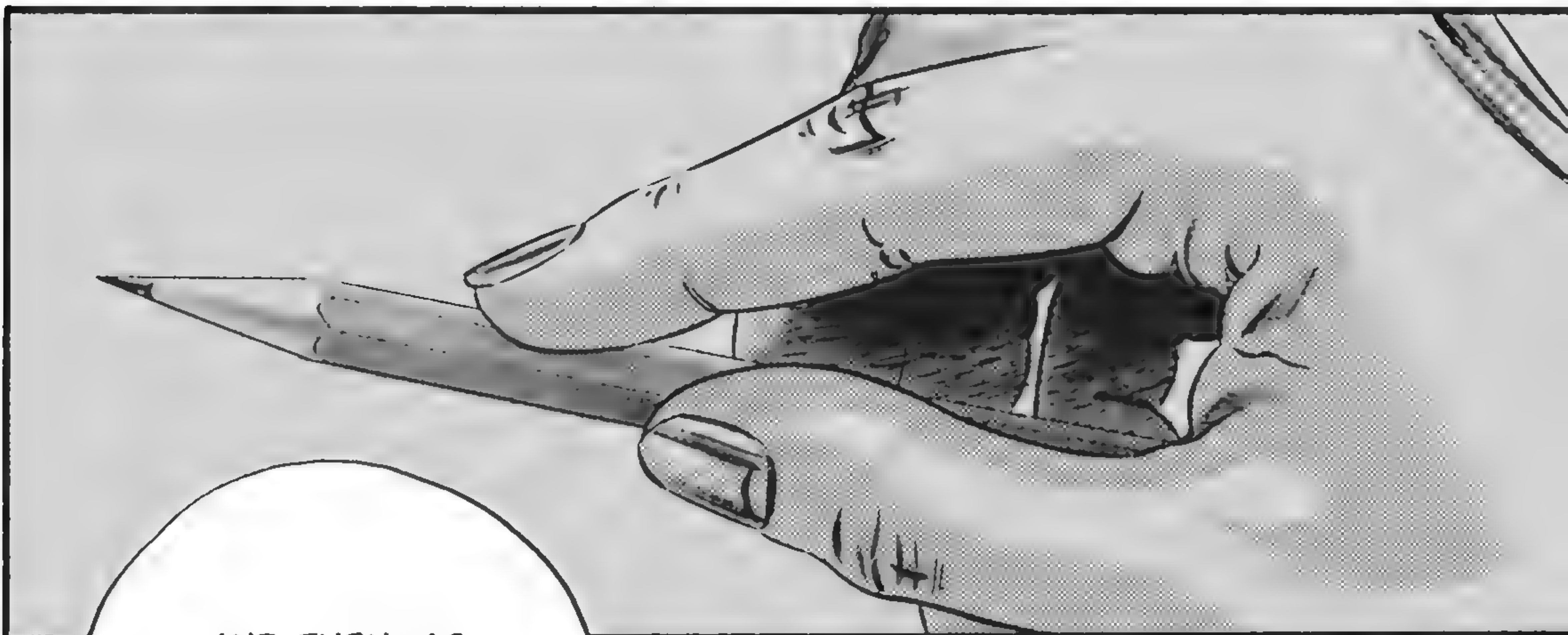


BUT IT WAS  
MORE THAN  
METAPHORS.  
SEE, UNLIKE  
ME...

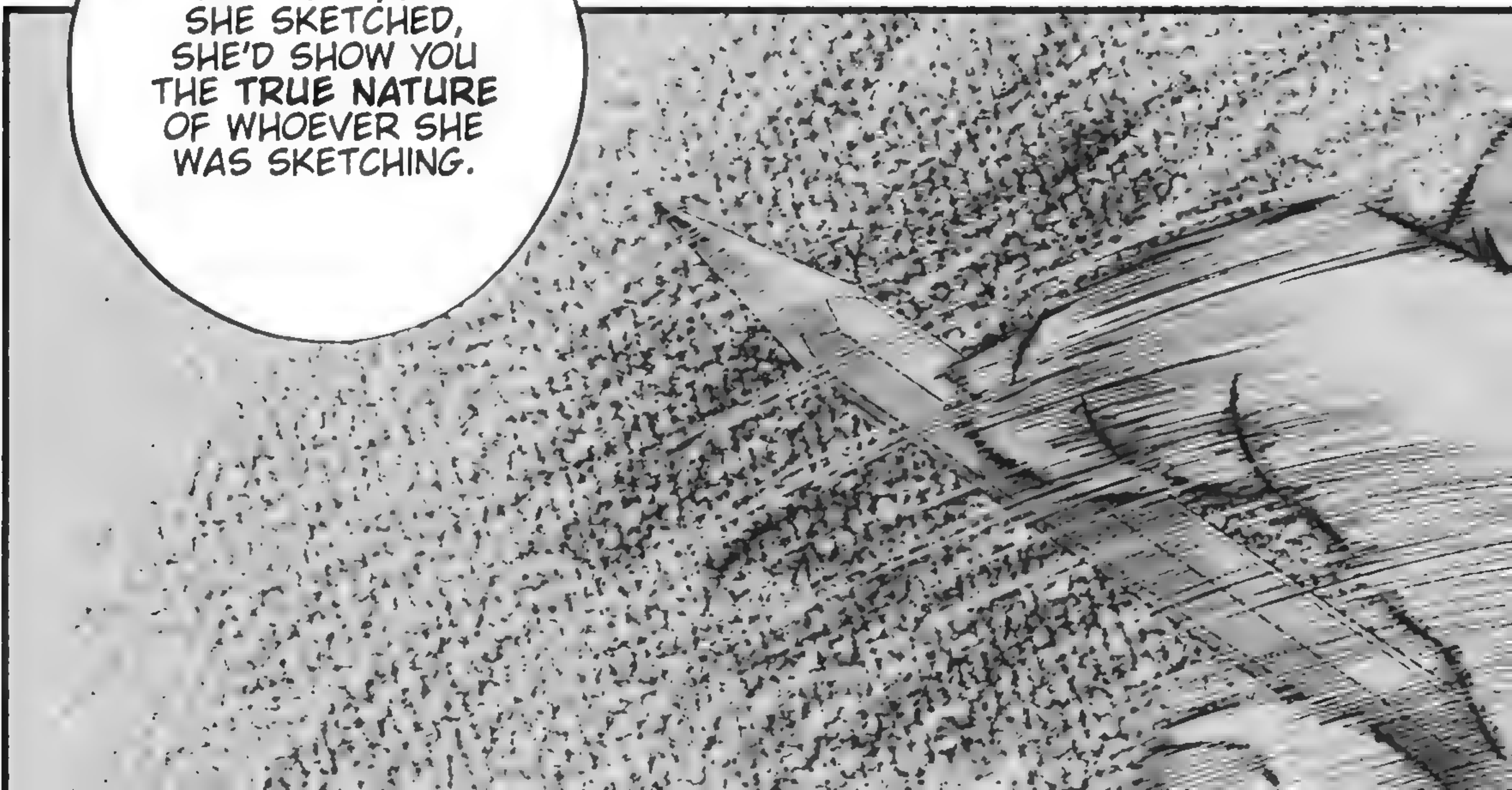


SHE WOULD  
REST THE  
PENCIL ON  
ITS SIDE LIKE  
THIS...

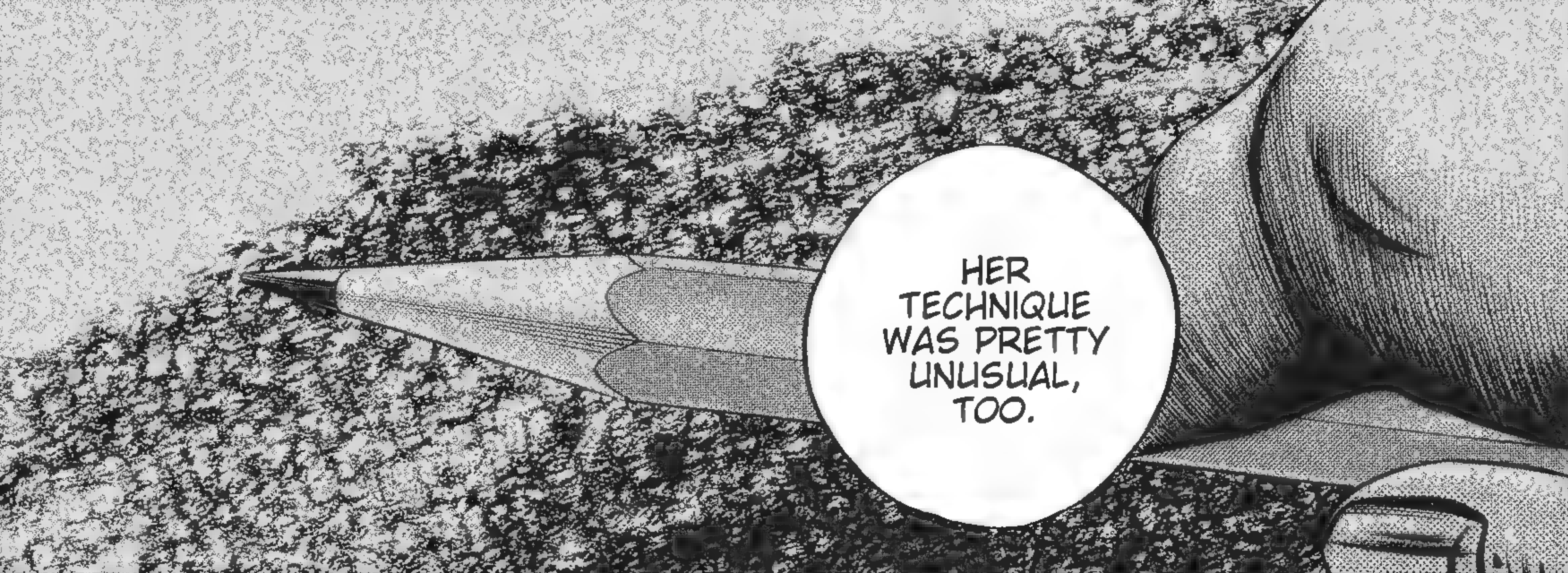
NANAKO WAS  
GOOD AT  
ART. LIKE,  
REALLY  
GOOD.



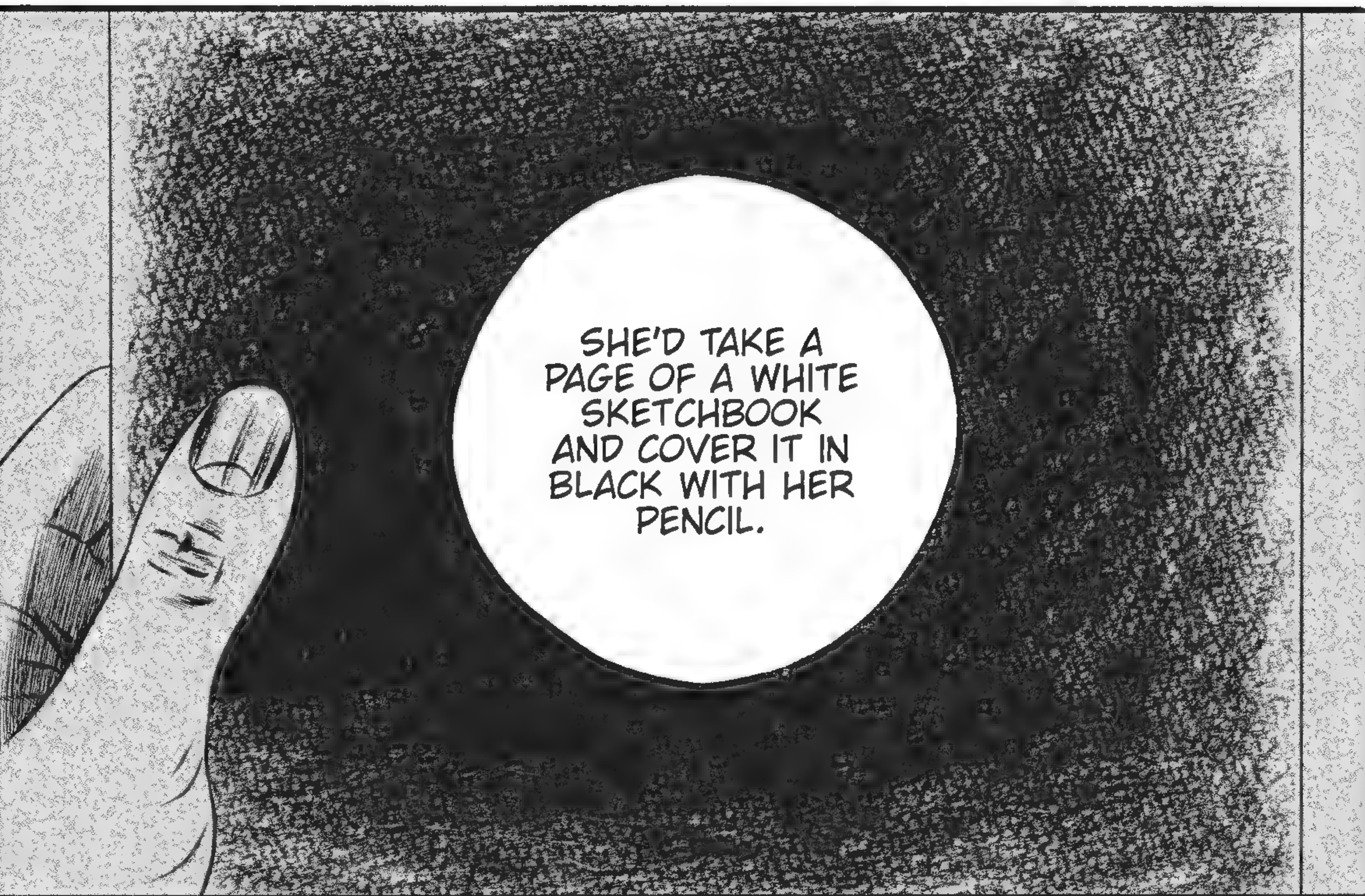
AND THEN, AS  
SHE SKETCHED,  
SHE'D SHOW YOU  
THE TRUE NATURE  
OF WHOEVER SHE  
WAS SKETCHING.







HER  
TECHNIQUE  
WAS PRETTY  
UNUSUAL,  
TOO.



SHE'D TAKE A  
PAGE OF A WHITE  
SKETCHBOOK  
AND COVER IT IN  
BLACK WITH HER  
PENCIL.



LIKE THE  
WHITE LIGHT OF  
A HUMAN SOUL  
FLICKERING DIMLY  
WITHIN THE  
DARKNESS OF  
THE BODY.



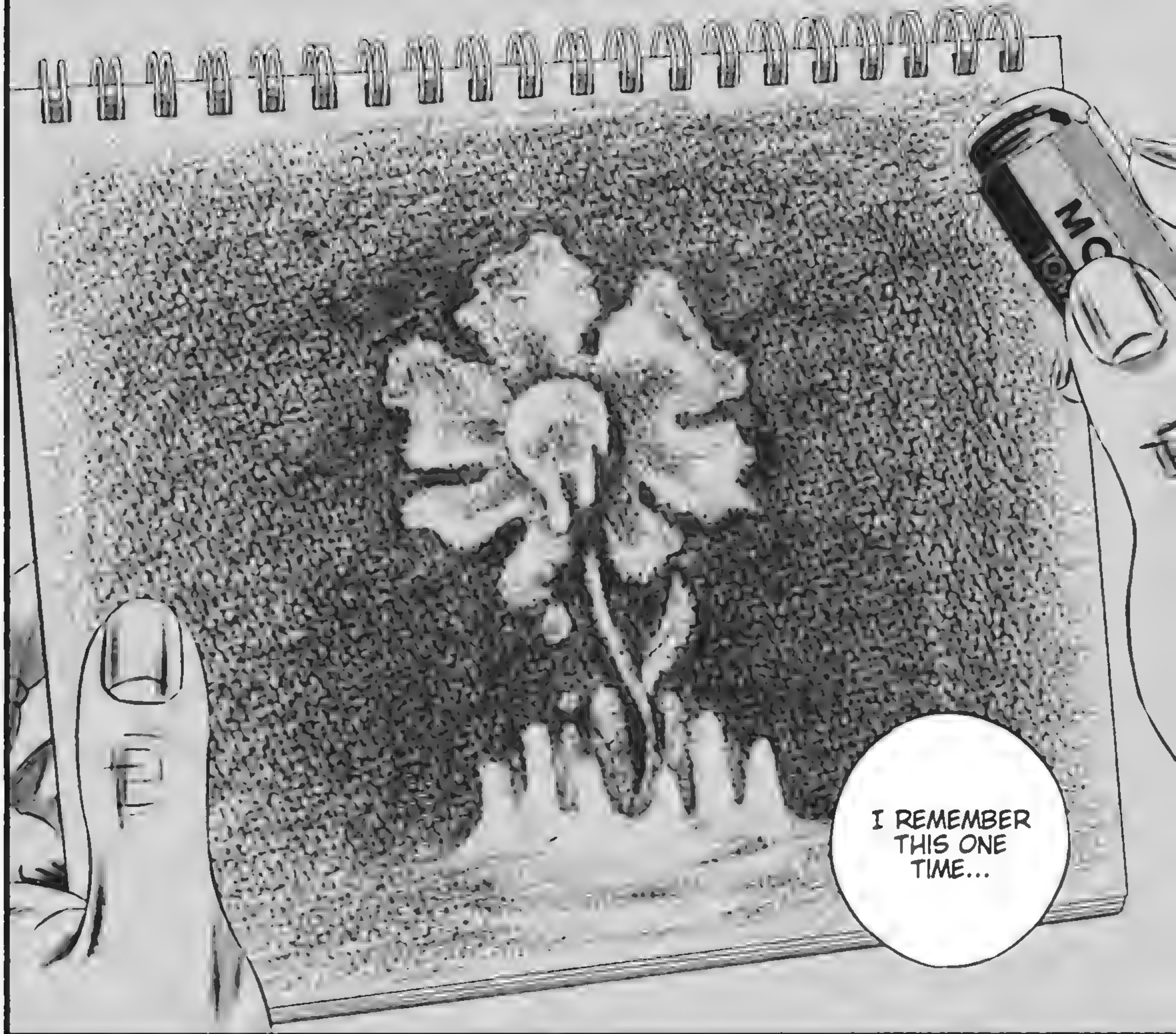
SHE SAID  
DRAWING WHITE  
ON BLACK  
FELT MORE  
"HUMAN"...



THEN...

SHE'D DO  
THE ACTUAL  
DRAWING  
WITH AN  
ERASER.





I REMEMBER  
THIS ONE  
TIME...

IT WAS  
"A FLOWER  
THAT  
BLOOMED  
TOO EARLY."

BUT NOT  
JUST ANY  
FLOWER.

WE WERE  
SITTING ON A  
PARK BENCH  
TOGETHER,  
AND SHE WAS  
DRAWING THIS  
FLOWER.





NANAKO  
SAID SHE  
WAS THE  
FLOWER THAT  
BLOOMED  
TOO SOON.

AND THIS  
GRANDPA-  
AGED GUY  
WAS PLAYING  
WITH HER.



THERE WAS  
THIS LITTLE GIRL  
IN FRONT OF US.  
MAYBE A THIRD  
GRADER, EIGHT OR  
NINE YEARS OLD.



BUT HOW  
COULD  
SHE TELL  
WHEN SHE  
BLOOMED?

THE FLOWER  
THING WAS  
OBVIOUS...



HER EYES  
WERE FIXED  
ON THAT OLD  
MAN WITH  
THE LITTLE  
GIRL...

WHEN  
I ASKED HER  
ABOUT IT...  
NANAKO'S  
FACE WENT  
STRANGELY  
GRIM.







What  
?!

He forced  
her to  
bloom...

It was  
him. The  
old man.

before  
she was  
ready.



No way!

You  
mean  
he...?

You  
can't  
be...

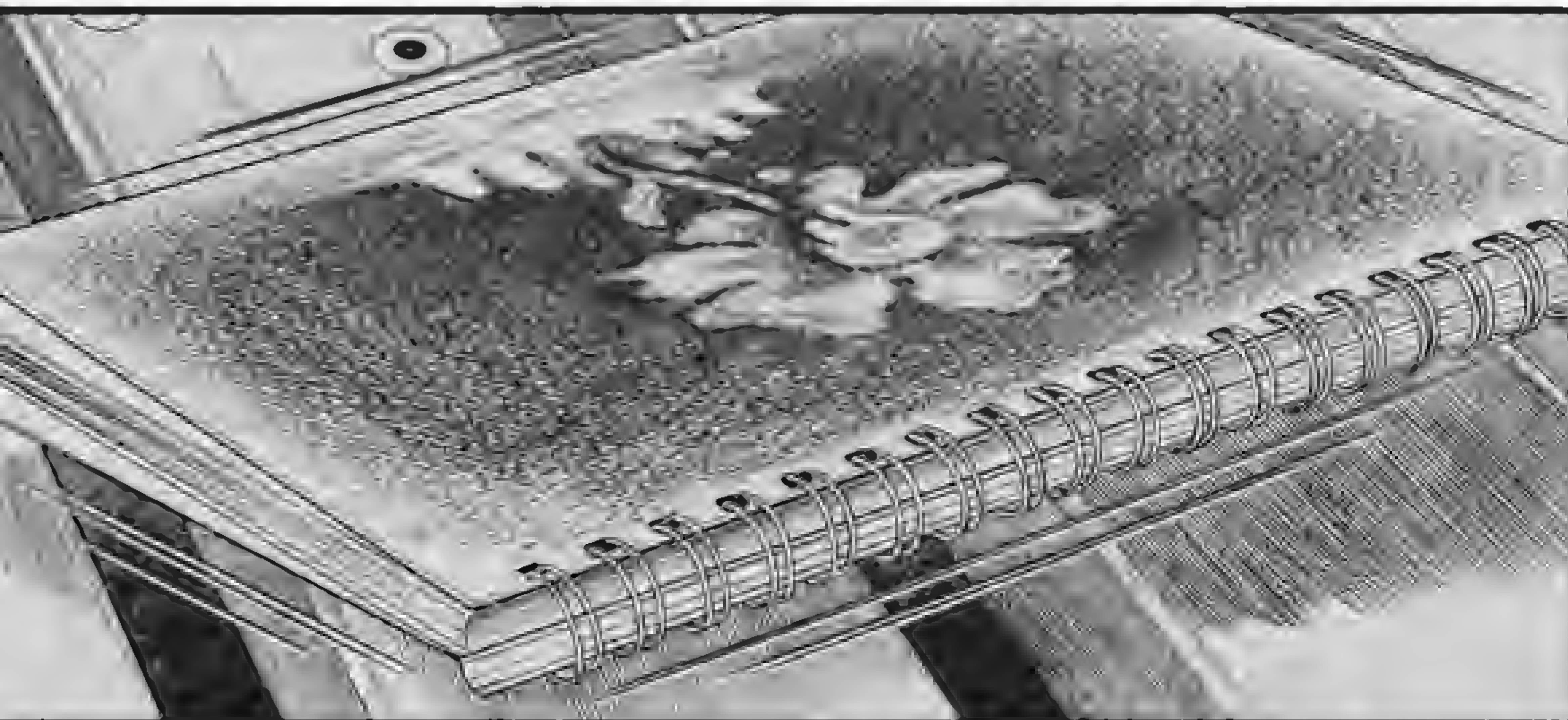


He's  
horrible.





BUT WHEN  
I GLANCED  
OVER, THE  
GIRL HAD  
STARTED  
CRYING.



BLOOD WAS  
RUNNING  
DOWN HER  
THIGH.







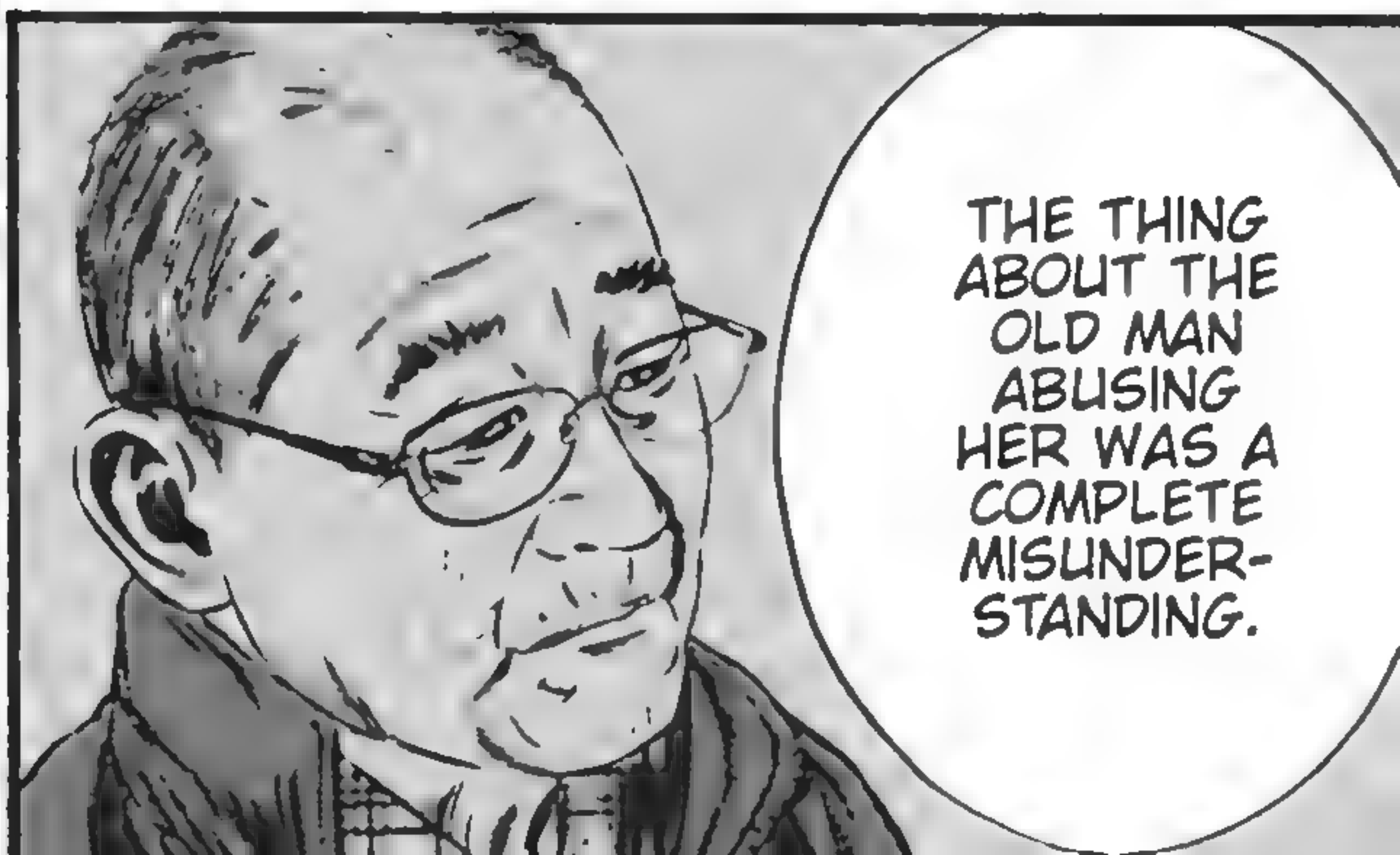
HER FIRST  
PERIOD HAD  
COME EARLY.



THE GIRL  
HAD SIMPLY  
STARTED  
HER PERIOD  
EARLIER THAN  
MOST GIRLS.  
THAT'S ALL  
IT WAS.

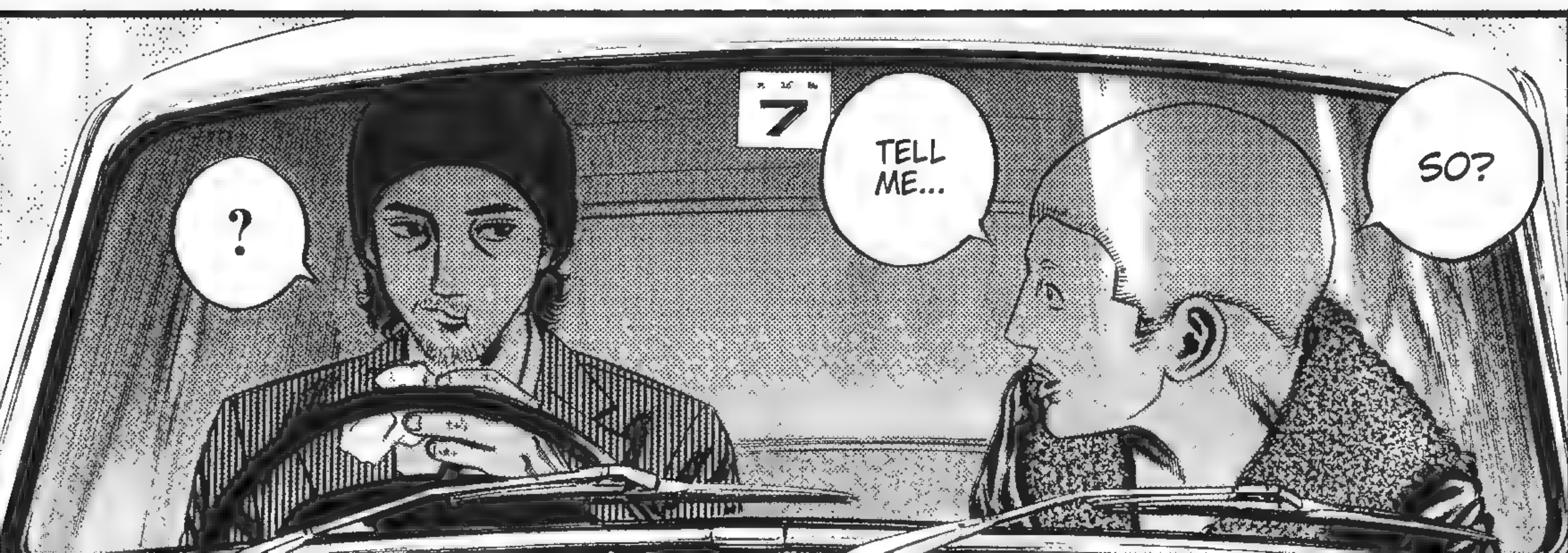
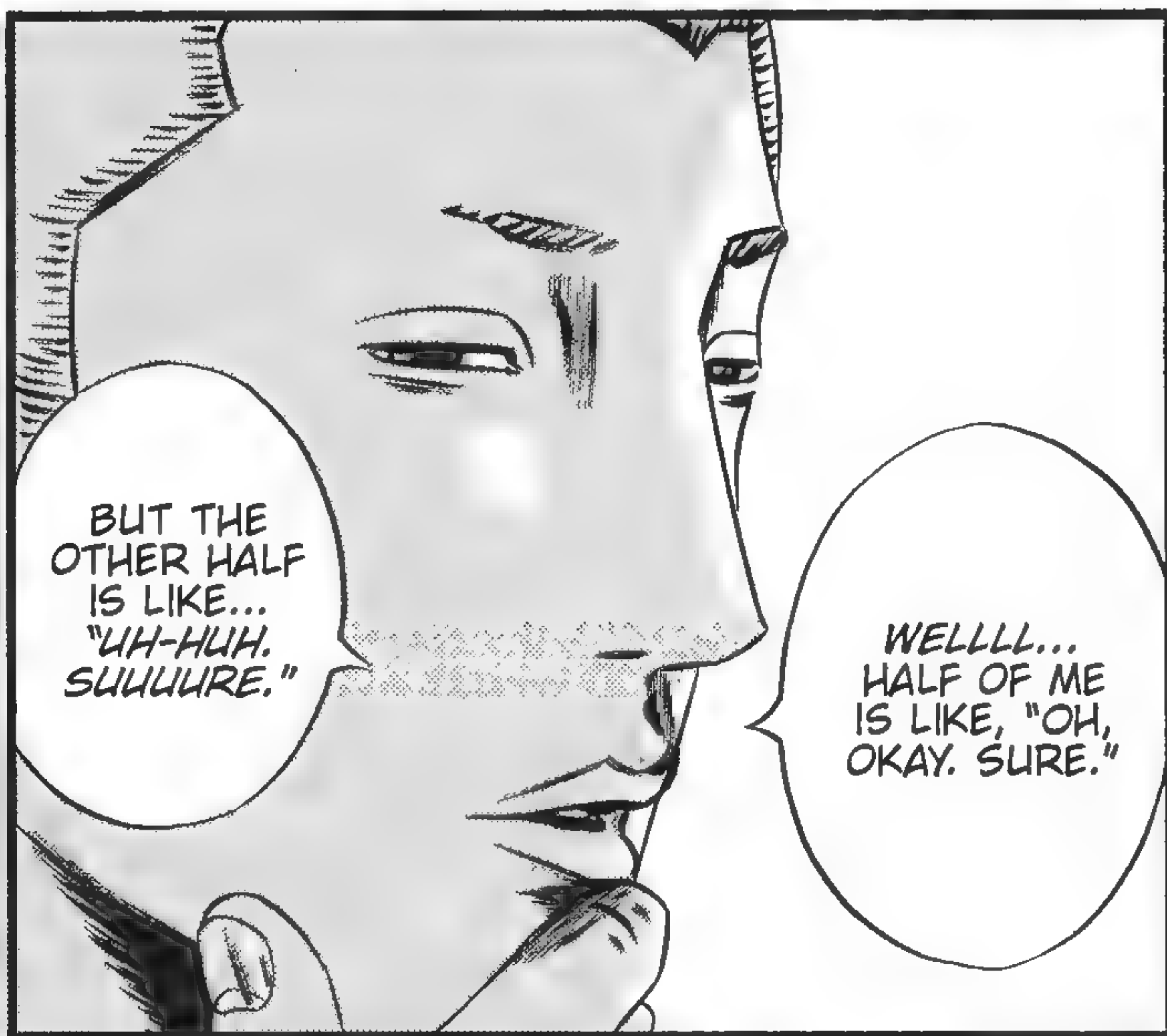


THAT'S  
WHAT THE  
PREMATURE  
FLOWER  
NANAKO SAW  
ACTUALLY  
SYMBOLIZED.

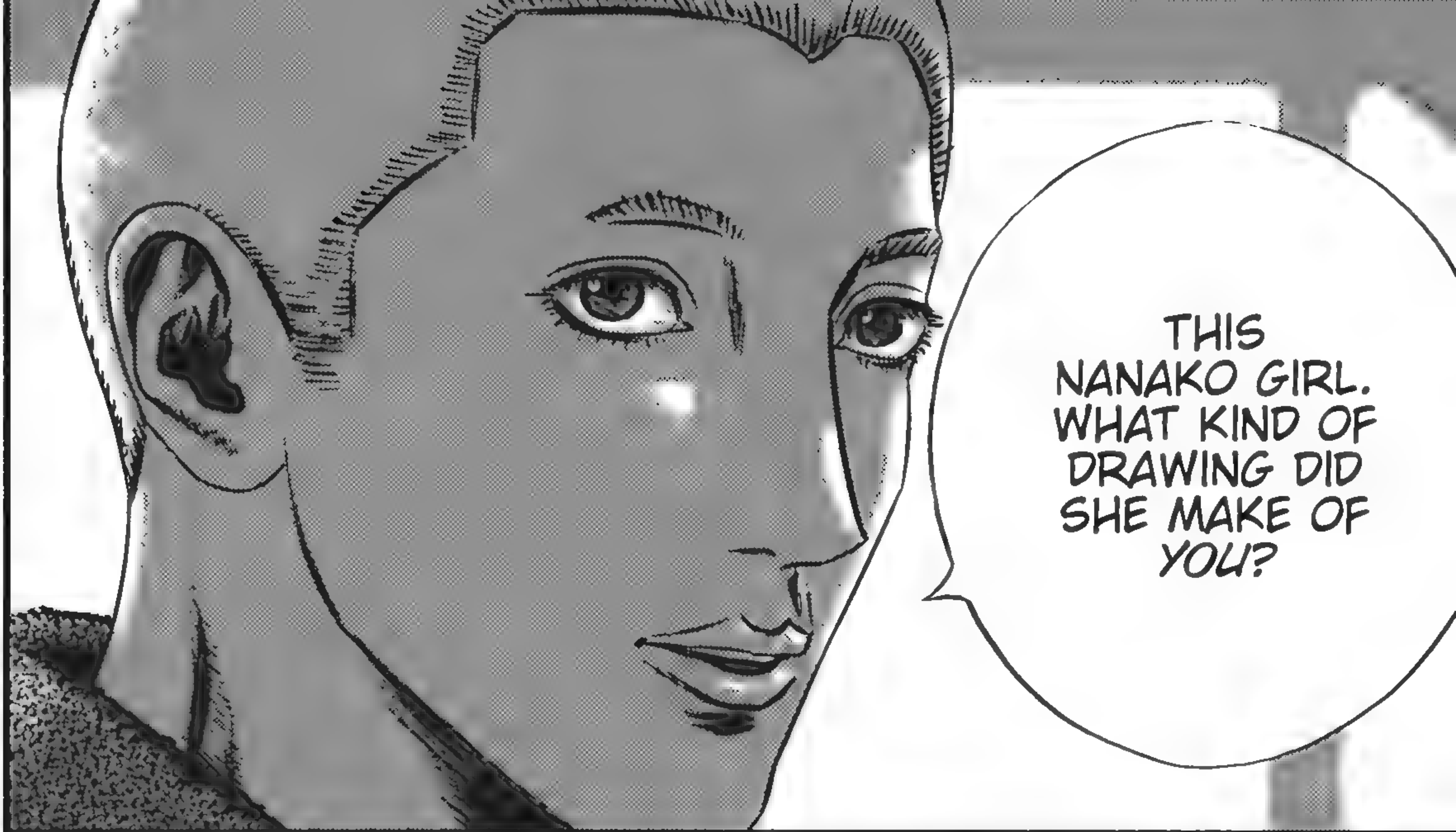


THE THING  
ABOUT THE  
OLD MAN  
ABUSING  
HER WAS A  
COMPLETE  
MISUNDER-  
STANDING.

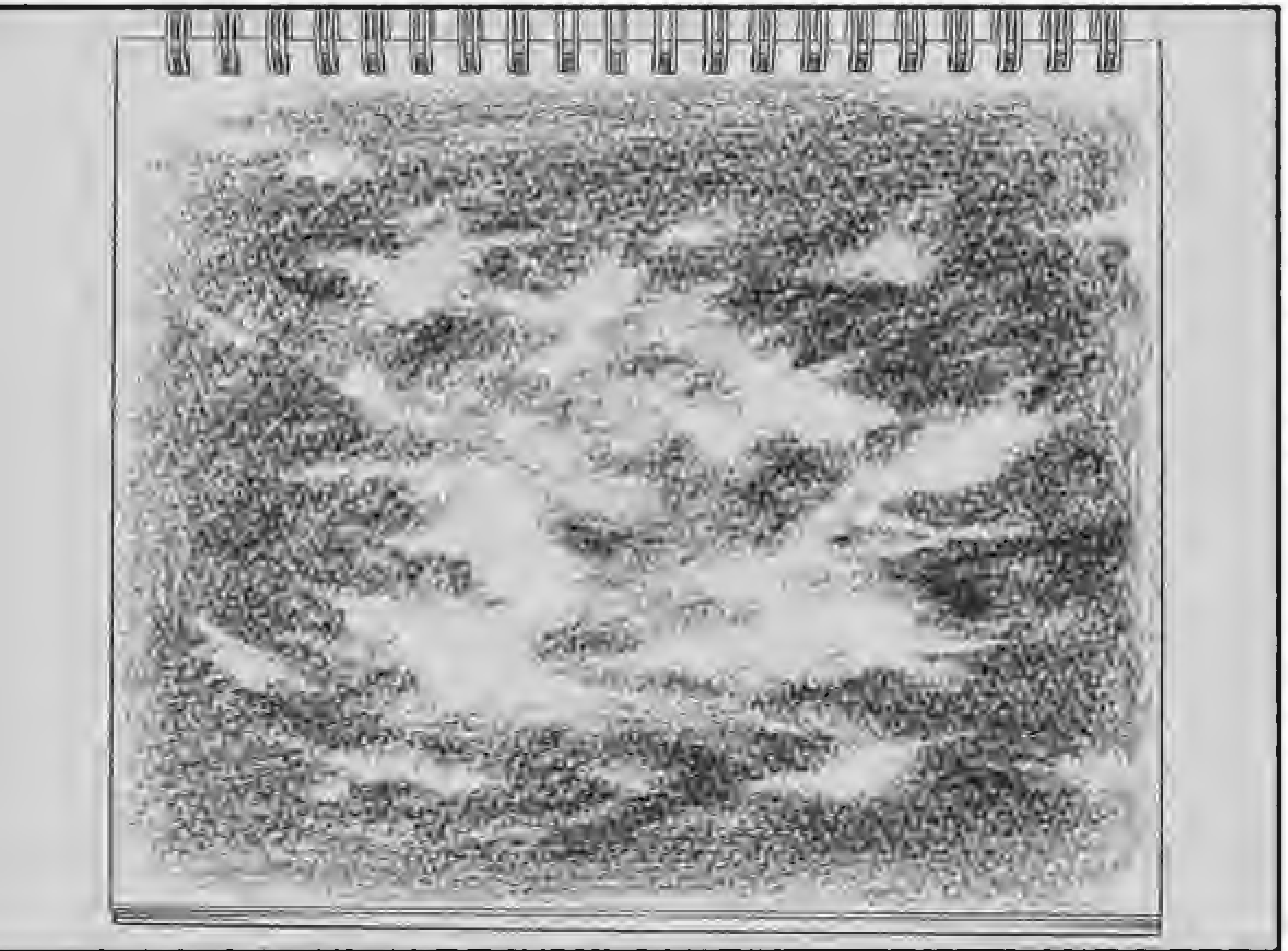
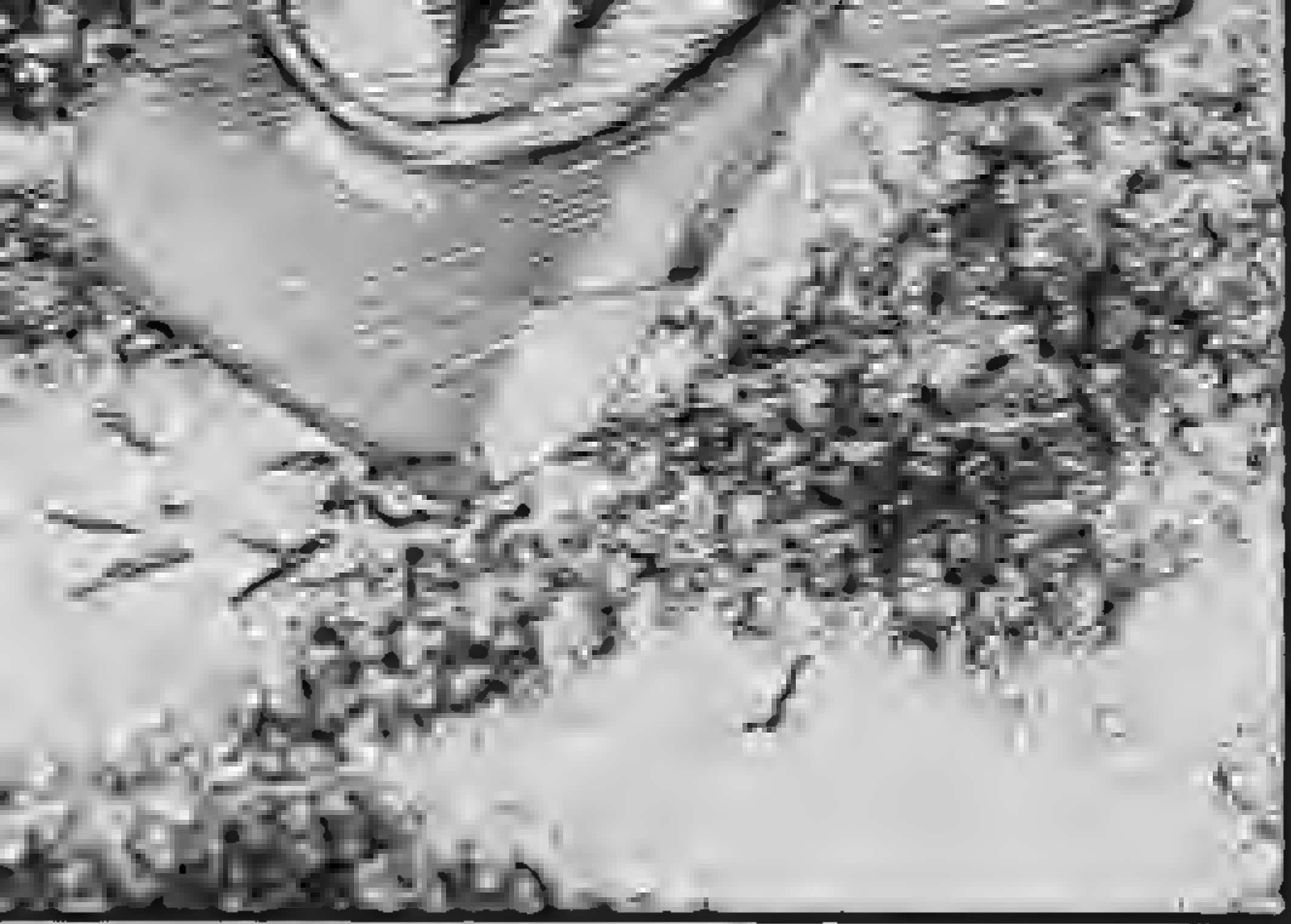




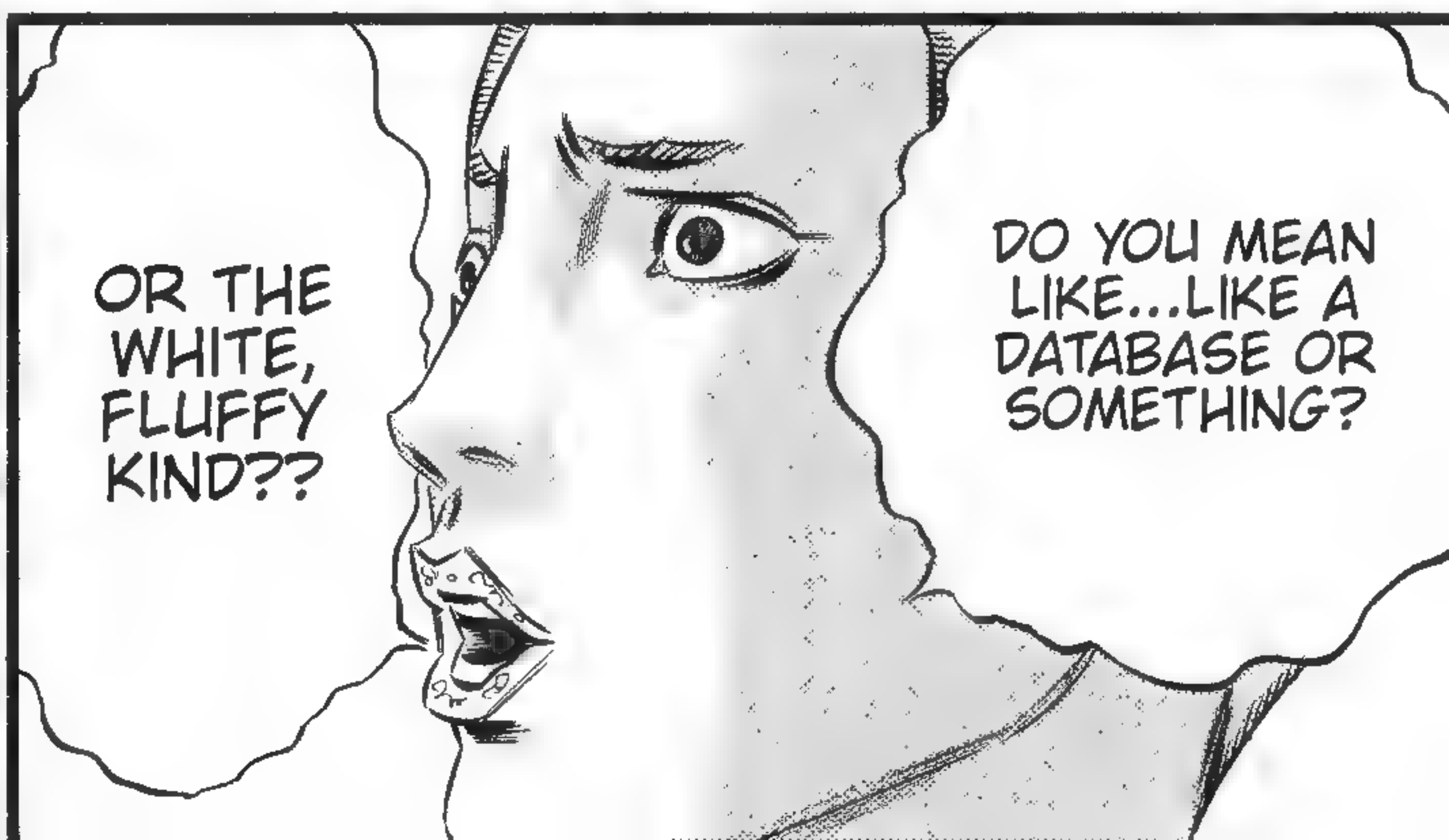
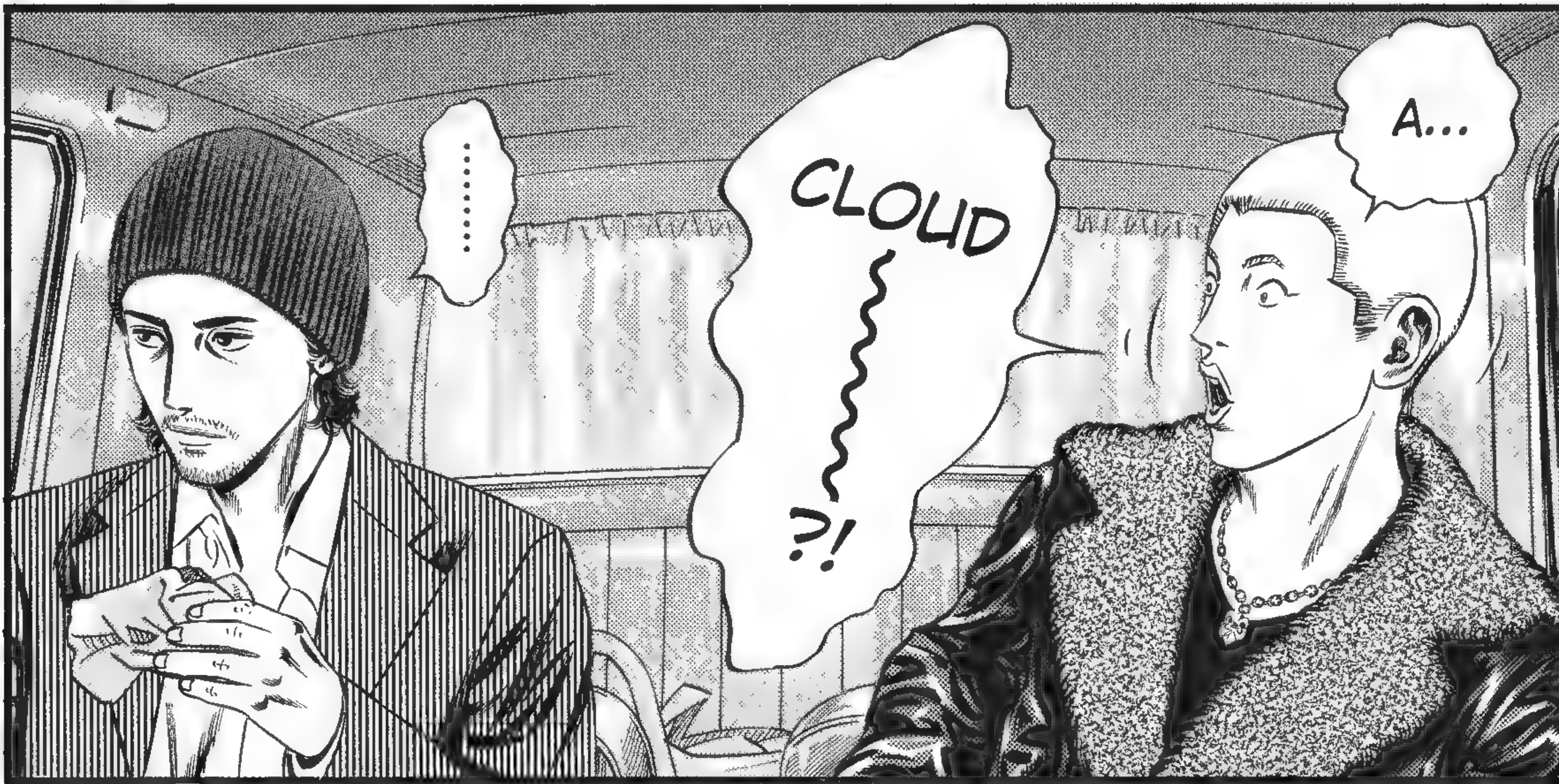




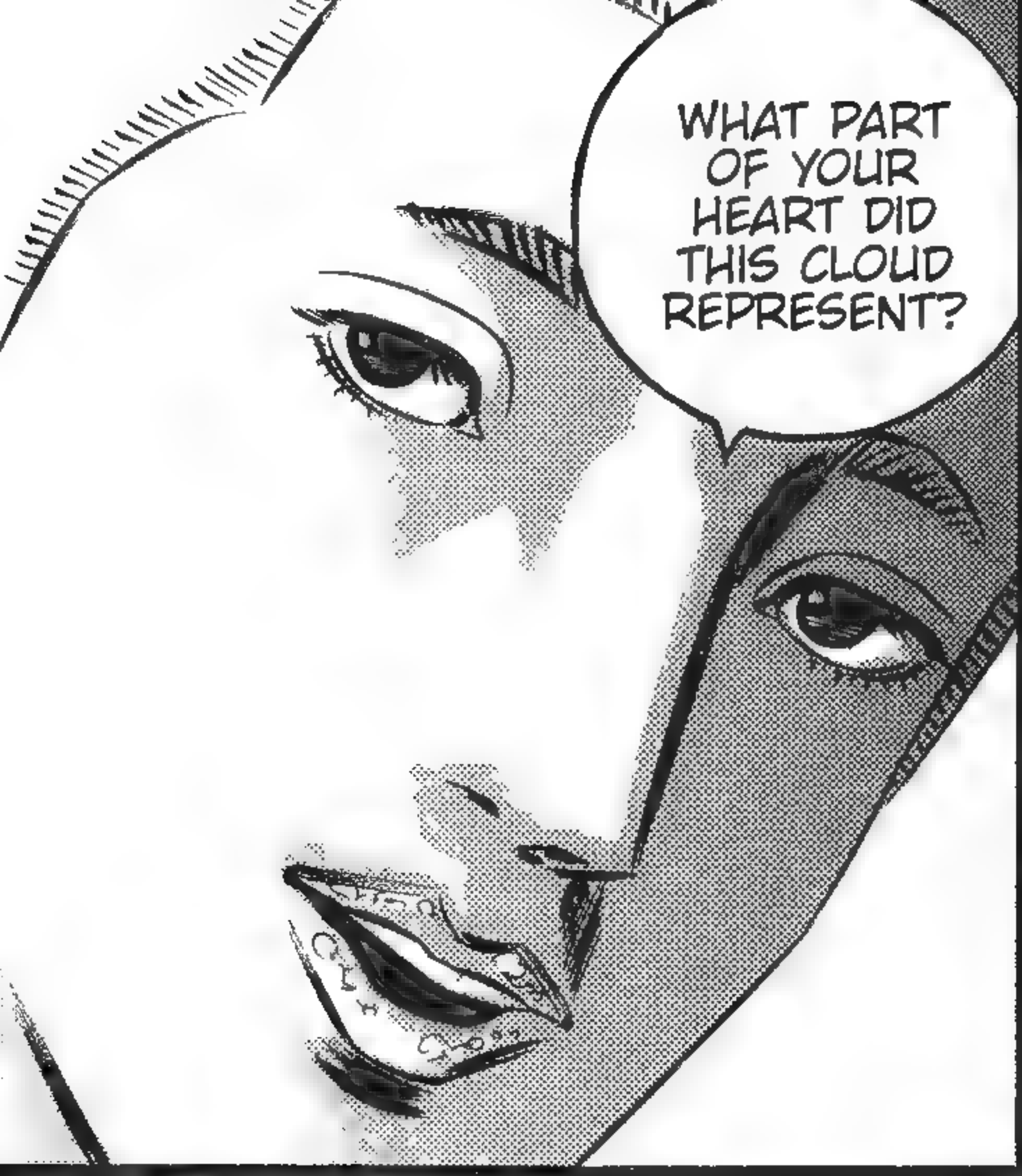












WHAT PART  
OF YOUR  
HEART DID  
THIS CLOUD  
REPRESENT?



?

TELL  
ME...

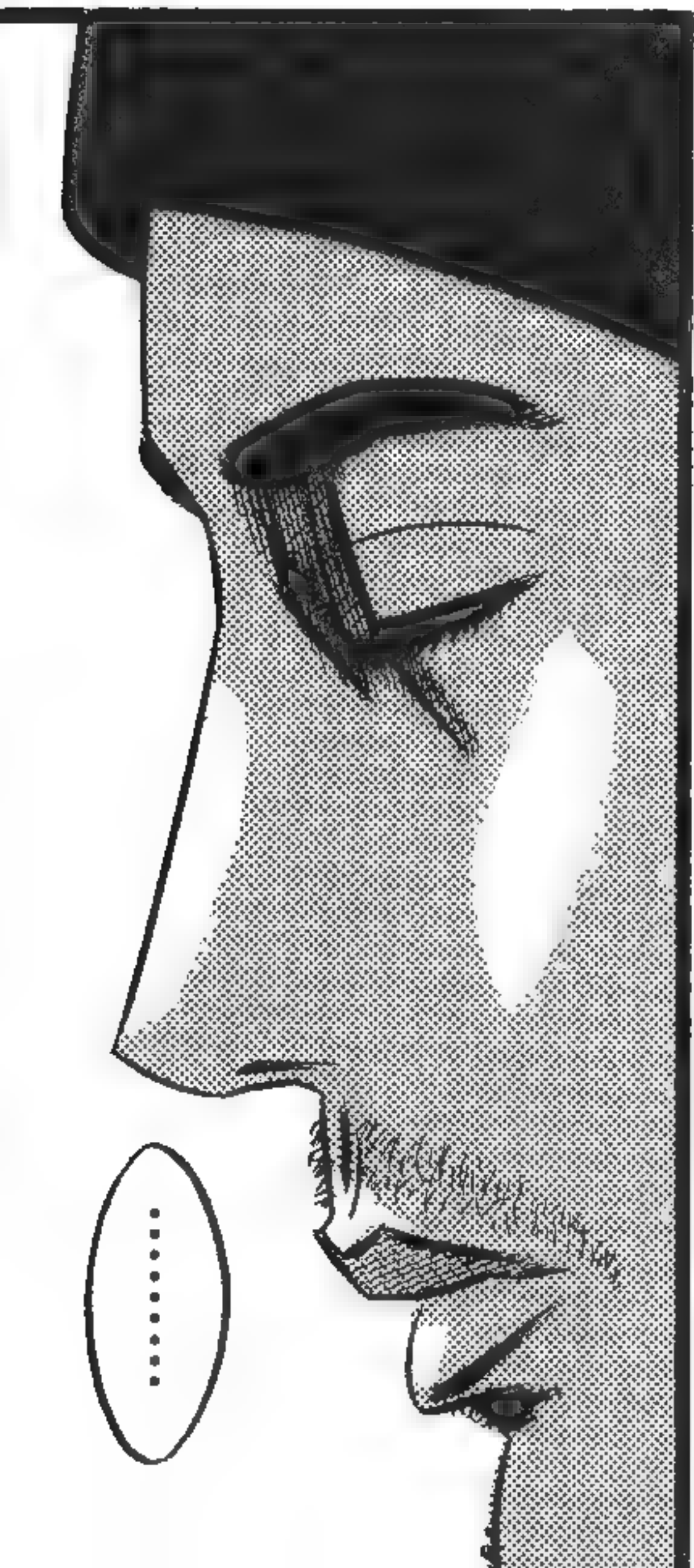
SO?



FINE. I  
THINK  
I CAN  
GUESS  
ANYWAY.

THIS IS  
EXACTLY WHY  
I DIDN'T WANT  
TO TELL YOU  
ABOUT IT.

...



...



AND THAT'S NOT  
YOU AT ALL. IT WAS  
JUST THE PROJECTED  
FANTASY OF SOME  
LONELY UGLY CHICK  
TRYING TO ESCAPE  
REALITY.



A PRINCE  
CHARMING  
WHO'LL ENVELOP  
YOU IN HIS  
SOFTNESS  
AND PROTECT  
YOU FROM THE  
WORLD.

SOMEONE  
WHO'S A  
CLOUD MUST  
HAVE A PURE  
HEART.





YEAH, I FIGURED.

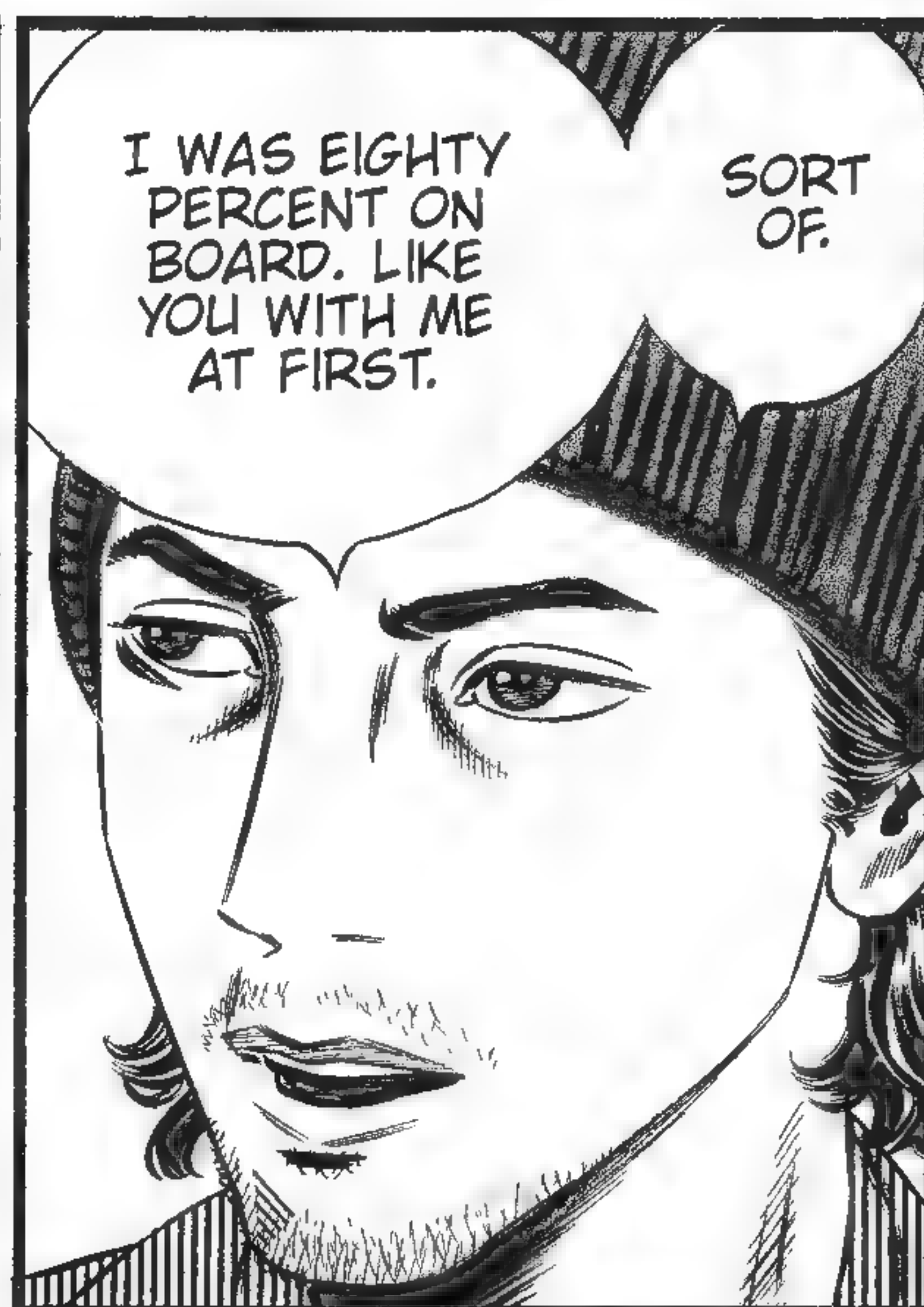
I'M LIKE  
TWENTY PERCENT  
ON BOARD WITH  
THIS AND EIGHTY  
PERCENT SURE  
IT'S TOTAL SHIT.

FOR THE  
RECORD...



I WAS  
FORTY  
PERCENT  
AT BEST.

I...



I WAS EIGHTY  
PERCENT ON  
BOARD. LIKE  
YOU WITH ME  
AT FIRST.

SORT  
OF.



NAKOSHI-  
SAN...

DID YOU  
BELIEVE  
IN THESE  
"POWERS"  
OF HERS  
AT THE  
TIME?



DON'T YOU SEE  
WHAT THAT  
MEANS? IT MEANS  
YOU, AN EQUALLY  
UGLY INDIVIDUAL,  
WERE ALSO TRYING  
TO ESCAPE FROM  
REALITY BY BUYING  
INTO HER NAIVE  
FANTASIES!

BESIDES, YOU SAID  
THIS WOMAN WAS  
THE ONLY PERSON  
TO TRULY SEE YOU!  
YOU SERIOUSLY  
BELIEVED YOU  
WERE A  
CLOUD?

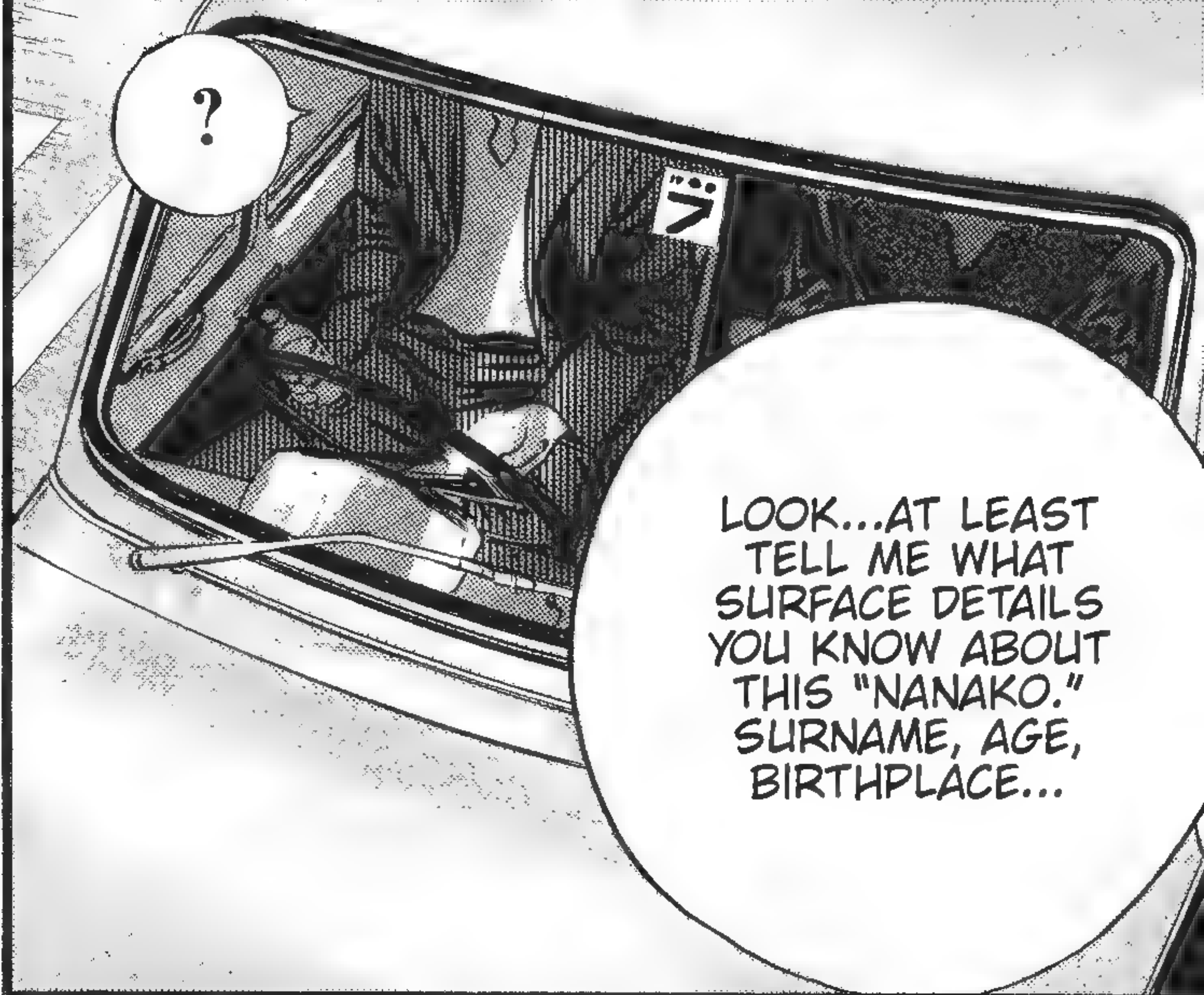




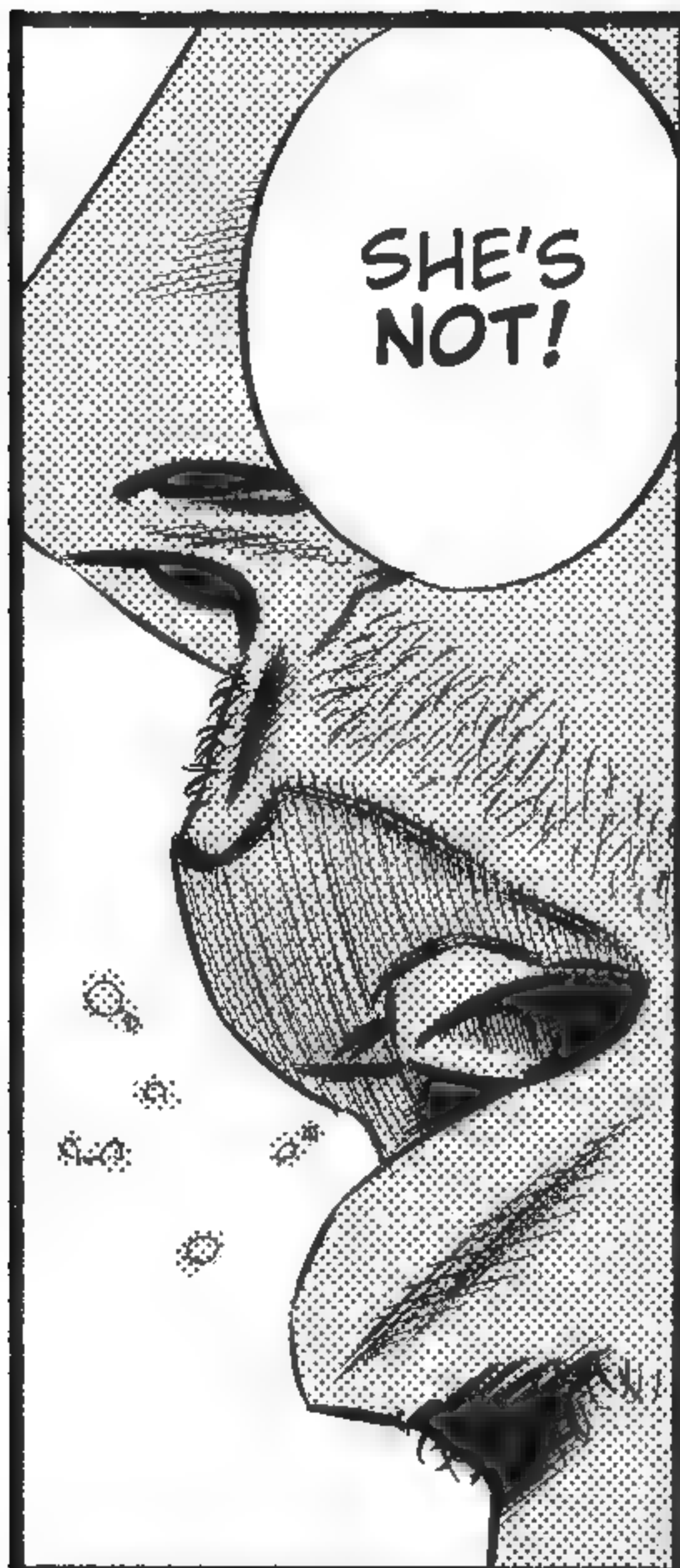




I'LL  
FIND OUT  
WHATEVER  
I CAN FOR  
YOU.



LOOK...AT LEAST  
TELL ME WHAT  
SURFACE DETAILS  
YOU KNOW ABOUT  
THIS "NANAKO."  
SURNAME, AGE,  
BIRTHPLACE...



SHE'S  
NOT!



NAKOSHI-SAN...  
IF YOU'D JUST LET  
ME HELP, I COULD  
FIND OUT IF PLASTIC  
SURGERY GIRL IS  
YOUR EX OR NOT.



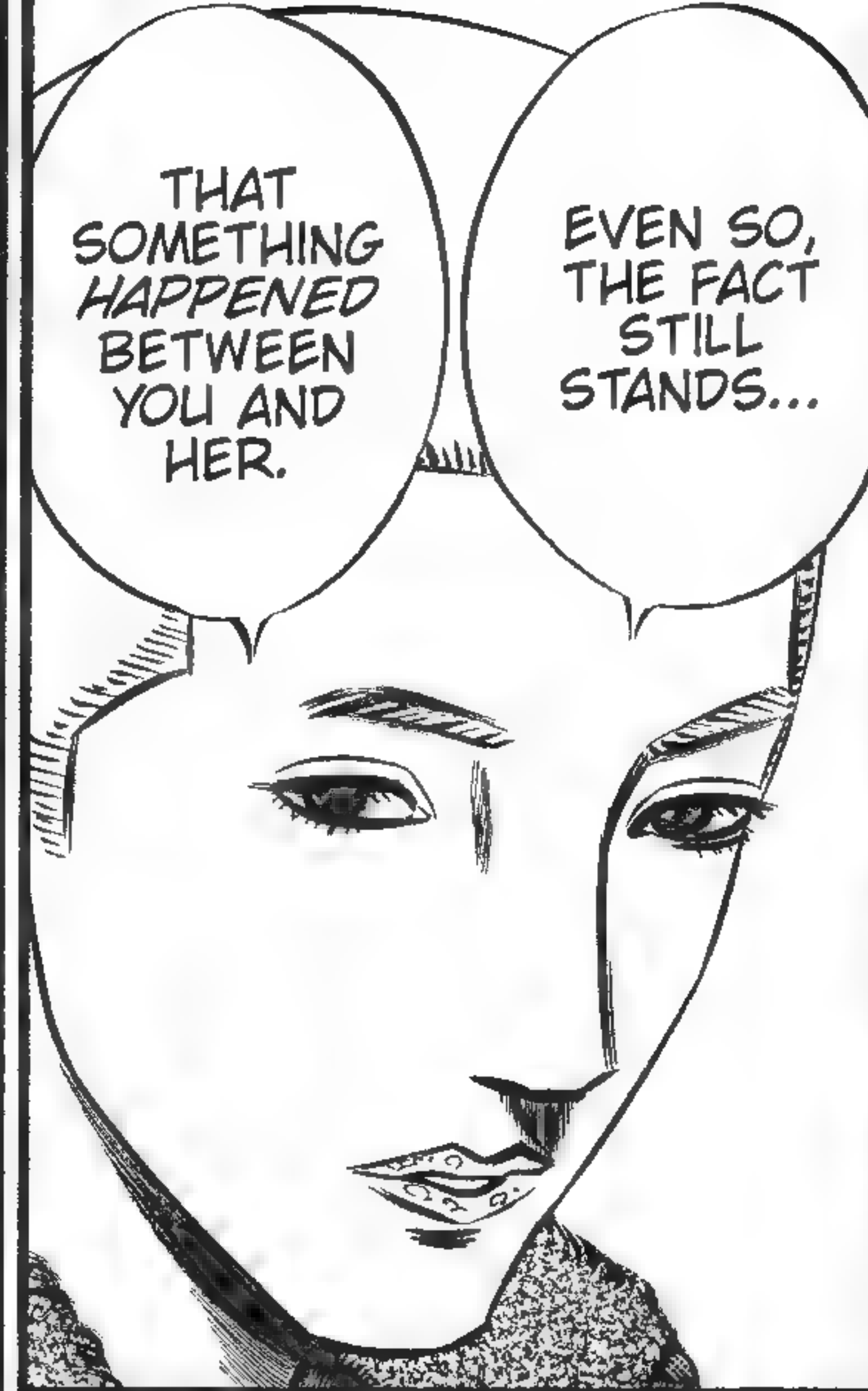
NO THANKS.  
THIS CONVER-  
SATION HASN'T  
EXACTLY  
PUT ME IN  
A SHARING  
MOOD.



THE NANAKO  
I KNEW  
NEVER LIES.  
NEVER!

I  
ALREADY  
TOLD  
YOU...





THAT  
SOMETHING  
HAPPENED  
BETWEEN  
YOU AND  
HER.

EVEN SO,  
THE FACT  
STILL  
STANDS...



LET'S  
ASSUME MS.  
CREEPY-  
FACE ISN'T  
NANAKO,  
THEN.

FINE!  
CHILL!



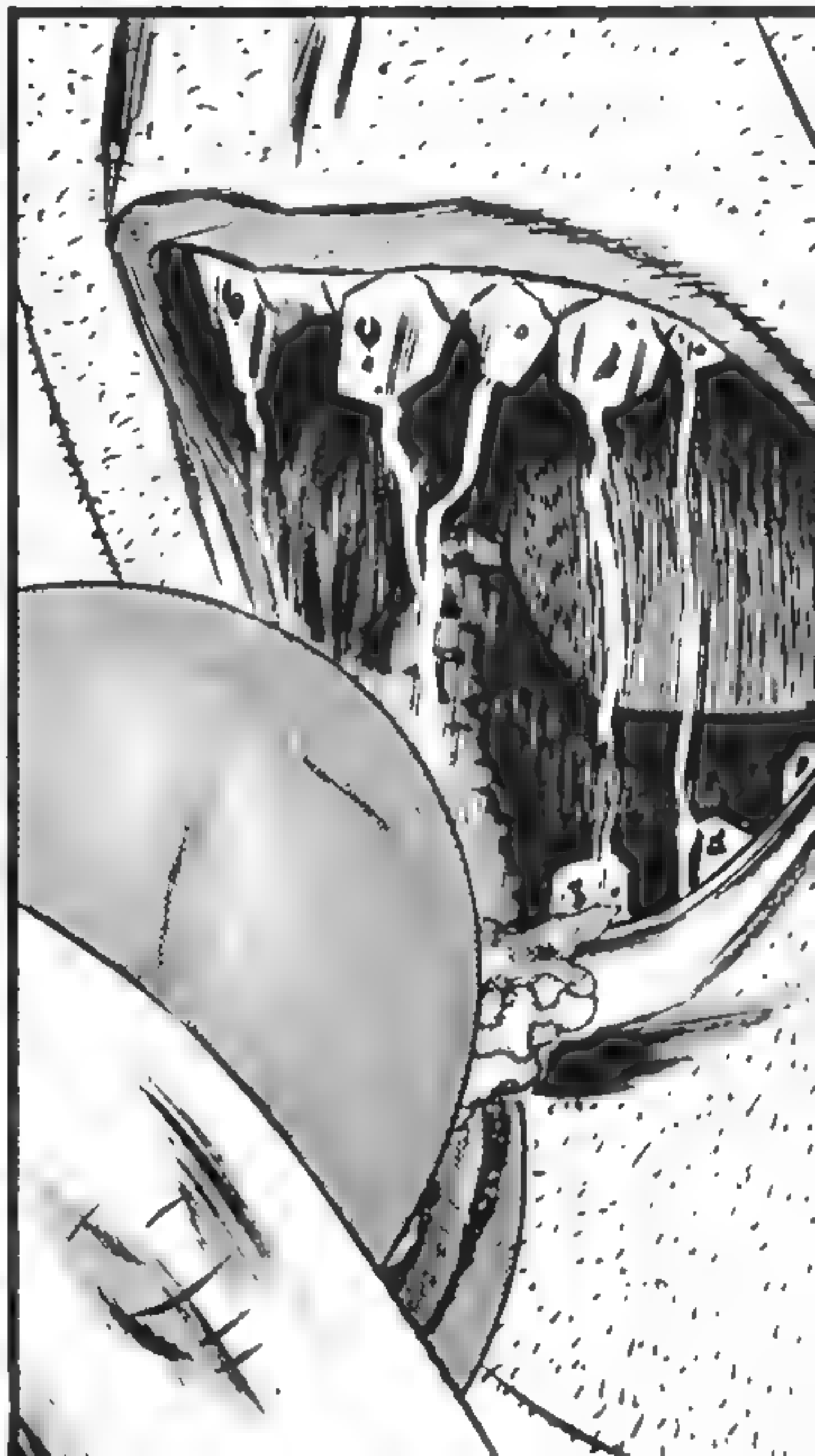
AND YOU BARELY  
REMEMBER ANY  
OF YOUR TIME  
WITH HER. YOU  
CAN'T EVEN  
REMEMBER IF YOU  
SLEPT WITH HER  
OR NOT!

EVEN WHEN  
THE REST OF  
THE HOMUNCULI  
DISAPPEARED, YOU  
COULD STILL SEE  
THAT WOMAN'S,  
RIGHT?



SOUNDS TO  
ME LIKE YOUR  
SUBCONSCIOUS  
IS TRYING TO  
HIDE SOMETHING  
FROM YOU.  
SOMETHING  
IMPORTANT!





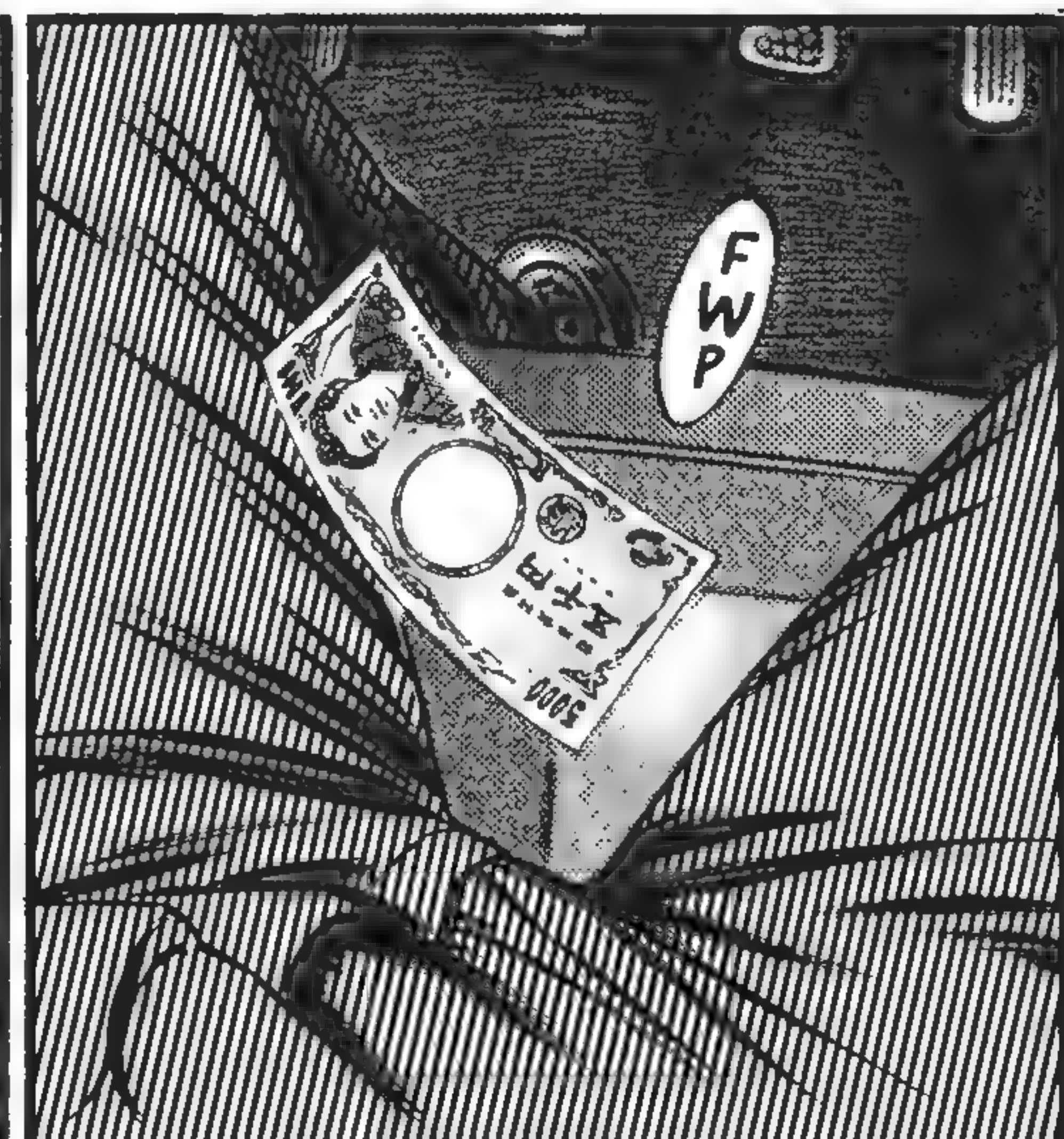




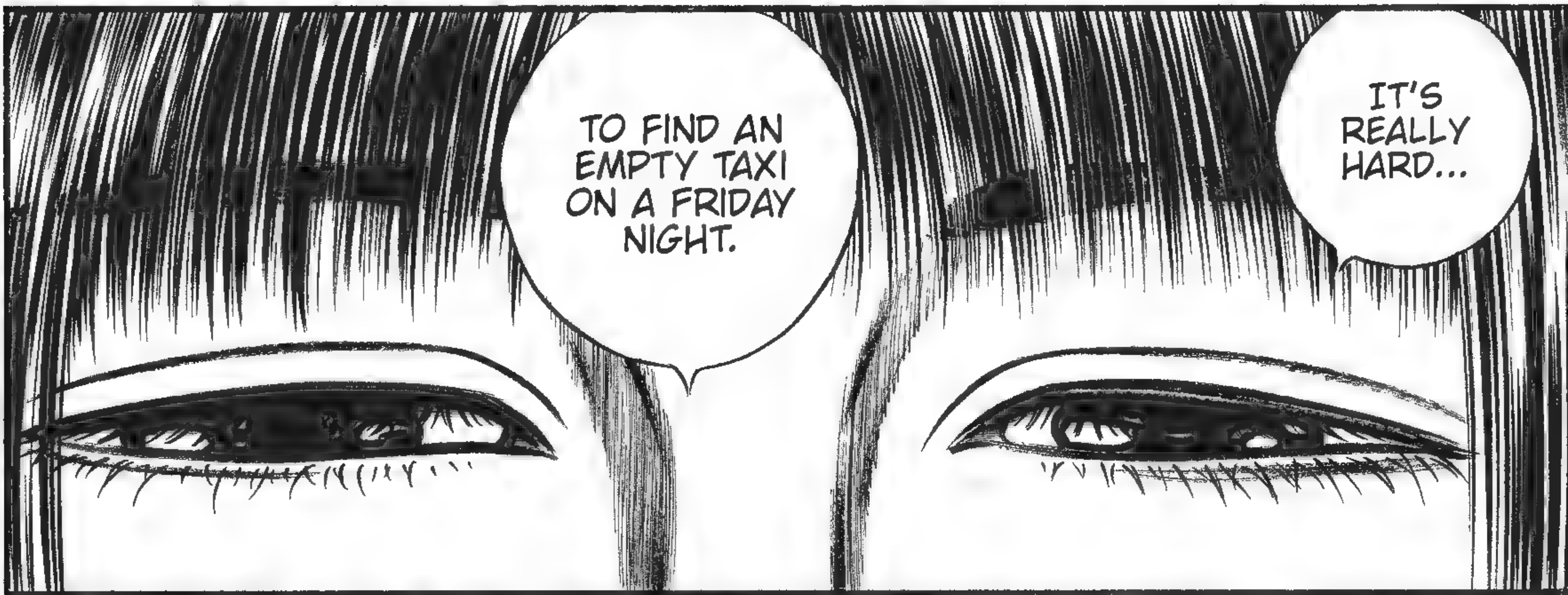
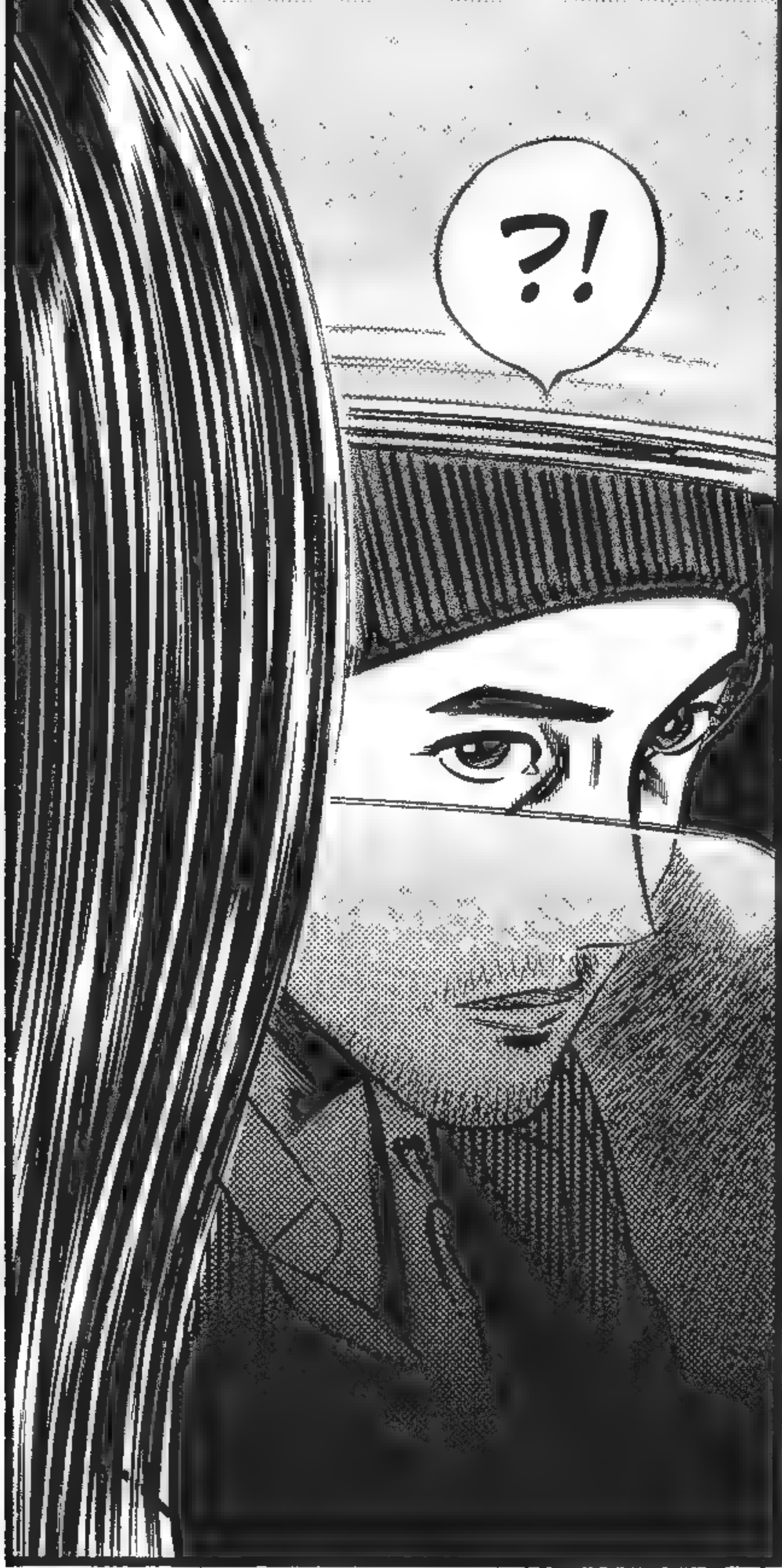




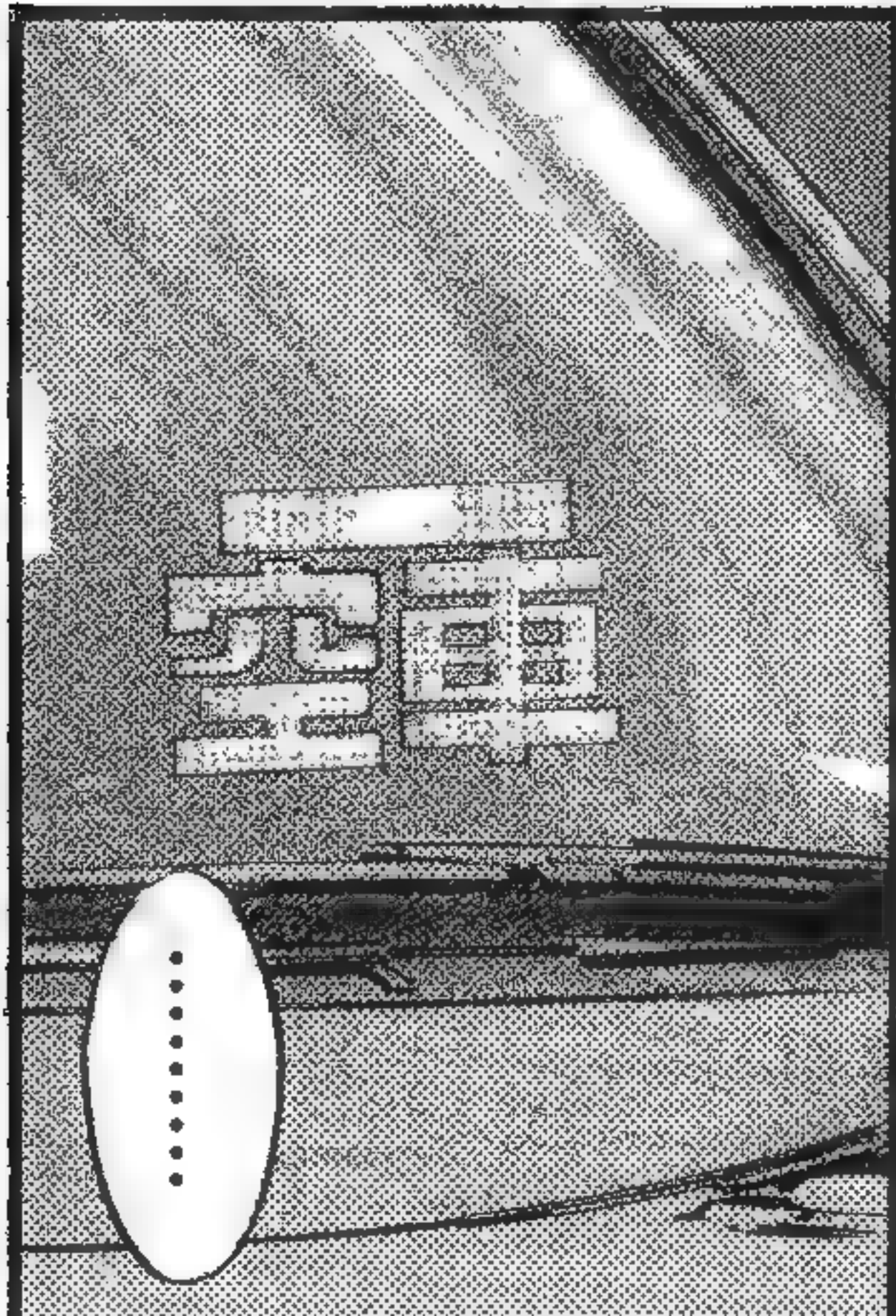








Taxi: Vacant







IS THAT  
NOT  
ENOUGH  
MONEY?



WHAT'S  
THE  
MATTER?

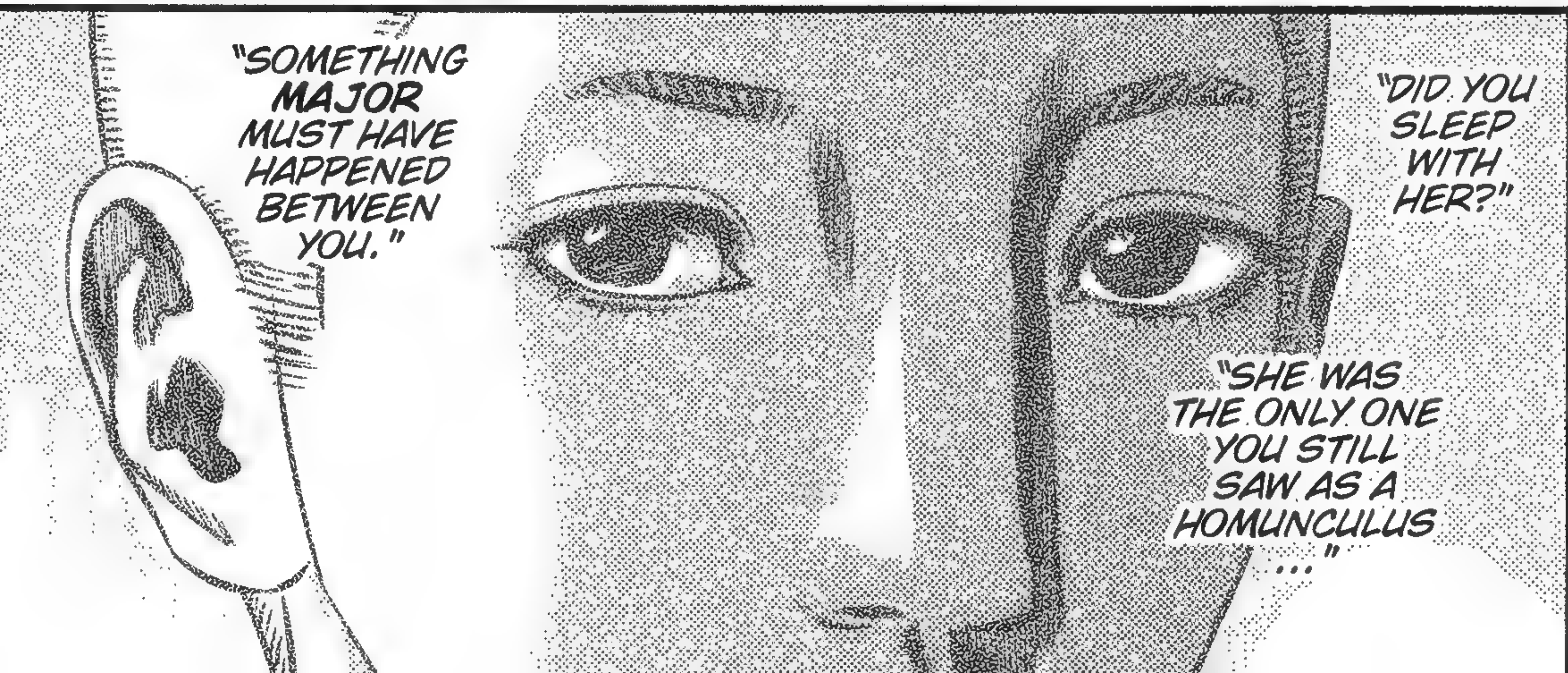


UNLESS  
I PAY WITH  
MY BODY?

YOU  
WON'T  
LET ME  
IN...



OR  
PERHAPS  
...

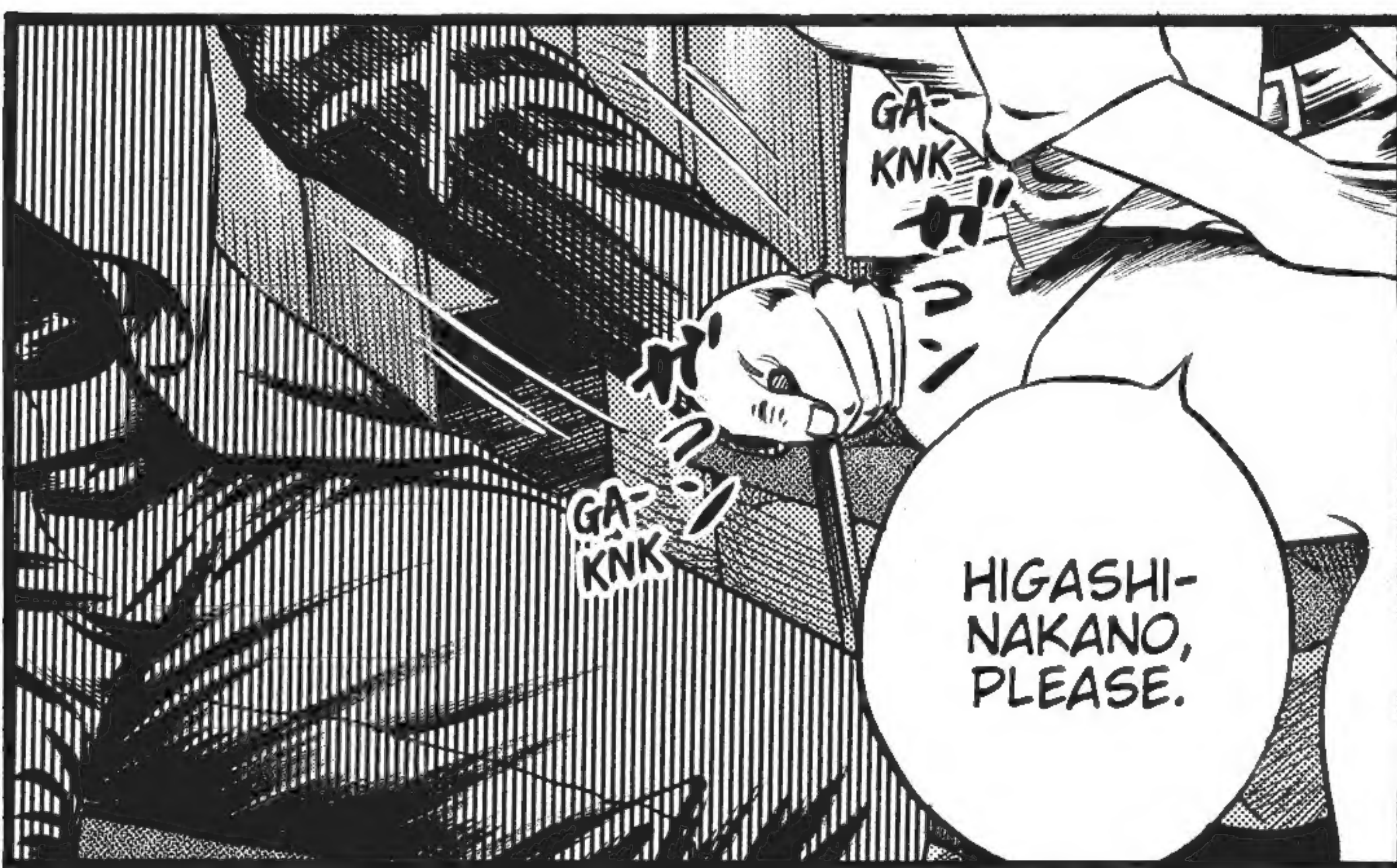


"SOMETHING  
MAJOR  
MUST HAVE  
HAPPENED  
BETWEEN  
YOU."

"DID YOU  
SLEEP  
WITH  
HER?"

"SHE WAS  
THE ONLY ONE  
YOU STILL  
SAW AS A  
HOMUNCULUS  
...."







To be continued in *Homunculus* Volume 9.



SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

# Homunculus

Volume 7-8

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HOMUNCULUS [BUNKO] Vol. 7-8

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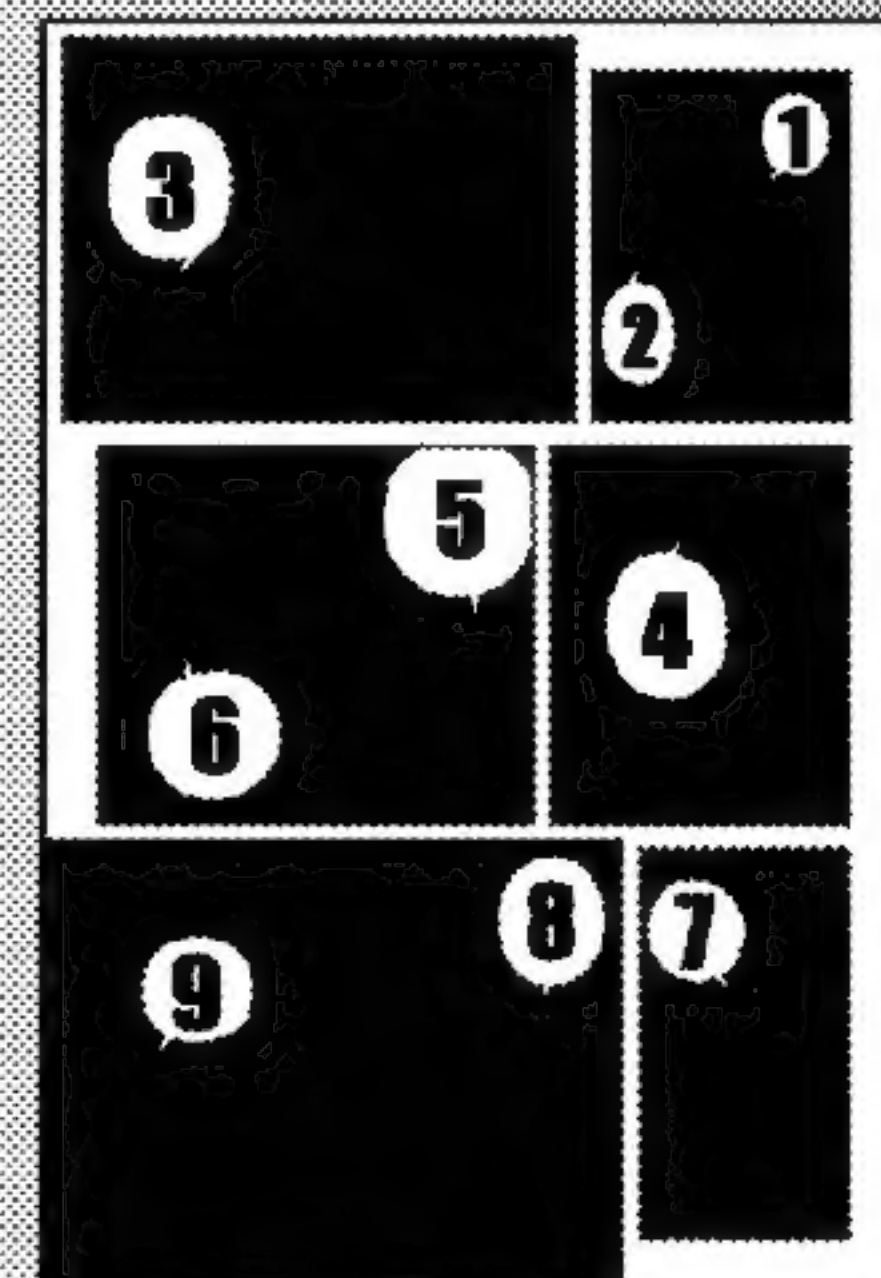
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## READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from *right to left*, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



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# Face Off

Nakoshi is getting closer to the crux of who he is, and he's starting with his face—the one he *used* to have. One by one, the lies Nakoshi and Ito have told each other are coming to light. Are these the revelations Nakoshi has been seeking? Or are they waiting for him even farther down the twisted road of homunculi?

From the creator of *Ichi the Killer* and *Voyeur*, the hit supernatural horror tale that inspired a live-action film on Netflix.



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